

# CHRISTIAN RULES

Proposed to the E. 6. 12

## VERTUOUS SOUL

Aspiring to Holy Perfection,

WHEREBY

To regulate both her Time and Actions  
for the obtaining her blessed end.

---

*Galat. 6. vers. 16.*

*Whosoever shall follow this Rule, Peace  
upon them and mercy.*

*But it is not enough to have a good will,  
to do well, unless it be accompanied with  
doing well. S. Ambr. lib. de offic.*

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The Third Edition  
Renewed, and augmented by the  
Author. W. C.

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Printed in the year, 1665.



# CHRISTIAN BIBLES

Proposed to the  
 VERTUOUS SOLD  
 Aspiring to Holy Perfection



260:90

Renewed, and augmented by the  
 Author, N. C.

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Z. 6. 12



The Epistle  
**DEDICATORY**  
To the most  
Noble and Renowned  
**Catholicks**  
Of His  
Majesties three Kingdoms.



*Honourable and Renowned  
Servants of Jesus Christ,  
my dear Brethren, to  
whom I wish all Peace  
and Charity in the bowels  
of that our blessed Redeem-  
er. You have already had a second  
Edition of this Treatise, with some Ad-  
ditions*

21. d. 3 The Epistle

ditions to the former ; which having found approbation by many good and vertuous Souls, others have been induced to desire it when no more Coppies of that Edition could be found.

This gave me the motive to review the same Treatise once more, and seeing my former pains had proved useful for the advancement of Christian Piety, I am easily induced to comply both with my duty to God, and my love and obligation to those of my dearest Country, in contributing according to my power, what I hope may conduce to the good of their Souls. And doubtlesse this good of Souls (at which I only aim) consists rather in pious practises, than in the lofty speculation of our highest Mysteries, which not being proportioned to all capacities, cannot furnish such occasions for the practise of Vertue, as are required for regulating both our lives and actions according to the Principles of our Faith ; good Example

## Dedicatory.

ple being more powerful to reduce Souls to the way of salvation, than any other manner of teaching whatsoever; since (as S. Bernard observes) deeds have far greater force and efficacy than words. This is verified in that glorious Martyr, blessed Lucian, whose comly, modest, and Religious comportment was so winning, and had such an attractive power, as to convert the enraged Pagan Persecuters to the Christian Faith. Yea the Ecclesiastical Histories make mention of whole Towns which have been moved to embrace the same Faith, beholding but the happy bond of holy Love and Charity which the Christians of that golden time did mutually exercise one towards another in their necessities. Neither was this spirit of Charity wanting amongst our English Catholics in the beginning of our persecution; as they who lived nearer to that better Age might well remember, to our present confusion, since we so easily permit our Ghost-

## The Epistle

*ly Enemy to sow his most wicked seed of discord amongst us. For redress whereof ( my dear Country-men ) let us give*

*Ephes. 4. careful ear to S. Paul, who most earnestly exhorts us to walk worthy of our vocation, by which we are called, with humility and mildness, with Patience supporting one another in Charity, careful to keep unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace. This charitable agreement is the proper badge which our Lord and Master Jesus Christ himself hath given whereby to discern who are his true Disciples ;*

*Joan. 13.  
35.*

*Si dilectionem habueritis ad invicem. The same also is earnestly recommended to*

*1 Pet. 4.  
8.*

*us by S. Peter in these words: That before*

*all things we should have mutual Charity continually amongst our selves. And*

*after that S. Paul had recommended to the Christians, Benignity, Humility, Modesty, Patience, and several other vertues, he*

*Colos. 3.  
12.*

*finally concludes : but above all these things have Charity, which is the bond*

*of*

## Dedicatory.

of perfection. *And therefore from the bottom of my heart, I most humbly pray with the same Apostle, that the God of* Rom 15. 5. *Patience and consolation will grant us to be of one mind one towards another, according to Jesus Christ; that with one spirit, and with one mouth we may all glorifie God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in imitation of those* Acts 4: 32. *thrice happy Primitive Christians, who had but one heart, and one soul, all united with that divine bond of Charity; which envieth* 1 Cor. 13. 4. *not, dealeth not perversly, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh not evil, suffereth all things, &c. by which Divine model the blessed Apostle gives us a perfect Rule for the right practise of vertue in all encounters incident to this our mortal life; and in it, as in a cleare glasse we may behold the beauty of true Christian Perfection; according to which if we would regulate our Lives,*  
*this*



## The Epistle

*this present World would seem to us an earthly Paradise ; where being so well united to God by grace , he would not fail to unite us to him in glory in the Cælestial Hierusalem of Beatitude. Which City is not to be entred but by violence ; that is, by mortifying our flesh, by rooting out vice, and planting vertues in our Rebellious soil, which since its malediction for the unhappy sin of our first Parents, naturally produceth nothing but weeds of iniquity ; unlesse by vertuous industry we cultivate the same, and water it with frequent Prayer, and labour also hard by vertuous exercises to dispose it to receive the warm Sun of Gods Divine grace ; whereby the holy Plant of vertue may grow up to perfection, and produce that happy fruit which purchaseth endlesse Blisse to our Souls.*

*This is a secret ( my dear Brethren ) of all others most needful to be known. And although you have so many Learned*  
ed



## Dedicatory.

ed Treatises which professe to teach that blessed Art, and have been written by such Learned and expert Masters of that holy profession, as it may seem temerity in me, or at least unnecessary labour to undertake so sublime a subject with my unskilful Pen :, yet seeing that the most barren ground may produce good metal for Mans use, and being encouraged by your former Courteous acceptance of my endeavors in this kind, I have judged it worthy my pains (as I have already said) to present you with a new Edition of the same Treatise: which as on the one side, I have enlarged by making some necessary additions; so on the other side, I have abridg'd, by separating from it the 4<sup>th</sup> rule which treats of the holy Mass: my design being to set out that Chapter apart (which I have also reviewed and rendred more compleat) and to accompany it with an explication of all the Ceremonies and Ornaments belonging to that holy sacrifice :

## The Epistle

*fice: As also with an answer to the chief objections usually made by our Adversaries against the Real Presence, Transubstantiation for its not being in the vulgar language and Communion under one kind. Wherein I hope that Catholicks will find matter of edification, and our Adversaries no cause of discontentment, or offence.*

*Tet notwithstanding, I expect that two chief exceptions will be made against this present Treatise. The first, that it is neither useful, nor grateful to serve to a Table, abundantly replenished with all curious and well drest Dainties, some grosser nourishment, which will not be regarded amongst such plenty of more delicate diet.*

*Secondly, that the language is so rough and unpolisht, as it affords no delight to the Reader.*

*To the first I answer, that my design is not to present this as a curious Dish to be relisht*

## Dedicatory.

relish by the more delicate tastes: but I rather intend it as a wholesome and grateful nourishment to all such as either want the help of other Books, or instruction for the true practise of vertue. For though vigorous, and ripe-aged persons disdain to be presented with any support; yet Children and decrepit people are glad, some to make use of a staff, and others to be born in arms. This Treatise may therefore serve as a staff to support, or as a hand to lead such as have most need of assistance in this kind.

Nor is it to be despised by any, because it treats only of spiritual practise, and flies not up immediately to that higher pitch of contemplation; for, I will not doubt, but if it well succeed in teaching the way rightly to produce holy acts of vertue; that fruit will give sufficient commendations of the Tree. Heaven is to be gained by action, and not by science, or contemplation alone; since each  
one

## The Epistle

one shall be rewarded according to his works, as our blessed Saviour himself has testified in that his divine discourse concerning the last dreadful judgment: yea, further, he requires that our works may so shine before Men, as that by the example of our vertues, they may be induced to glorifie our Father who is in Heaven. This light which Jesus Christ here requires that we should make shine before Men, is undoubtedly understood to consist in our actions and conversation amongst Men, much rather than in private and mental contemplation, which cannot appear so well to them. Good works therefore and a holy Conversation, being what God principally requires at our hands, which consists ( as I say ) rather in practice, than speculation; I was first moved to compose a practical Rule for the use only of a private friend, to serve as a spiritual direction to animate both their actions and conversation with a true Spirit

## Dedicatory.

*rit of Piety, best beſeeming the profeſſion of a Chriſtian Man.*

*As to the ſecond exception, concerning the ſimplicity of Language, and little elegance of my ſtile; I ſhall deſire my Reader to conſider, that an able & expert Phyſitian will not be leſſe welcom to his Patient, in a dangerous ſickneſſ, for being cloath'd in a plain and ſimple habit; provided he adminiſter ſuch remedies as may eſtabliſh an aſſured health.*

*Now my chief intention in this little work, is the true health of ſouls; and the ardent deſire of my heart, is, that it may prove a happy inſtrument whereby Gods holy grace may move the Reader (if he be Catholick) to love and ſerve our Divine Creator, with ſuch perfection as his vocation requires: or if he be in an erroneous belief, that God may touch his heart thereby to embrace the true Faith, heretofore ſo conſtantly profeſt by all our renowned Anceſtors, who were famous  
through-*

## The Epistle, &c.

throughout the World, not only for their great Learning and Piety; but also for their perseverance in that most holy and only true saving Catholick Faith, which was profest in our Nation for more than a thousand years together.

If Gods infinite mercy and goodnesse shall grant it this happy blessing, I shall with exceeding joy esteem both my cost and pains more than abundantly recompenced; yea, I would most gladly purchase the salvation of one only Soul with the last drop of my blood. But as for all my dear Catholick Brethren who shall cast their eyes upon this Treatise, I most heartily desire to be made partaker of their good Prayers; that whilst I labour for the eternal welfare of others, I may not neglect mine own, nor omit that duty which God requires of me, for the obtaining what he has so dearly purchas'd for us all by his most bitter death and Passion.

T H E



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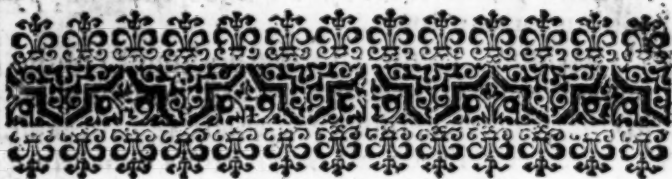
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The tenth and last Medication.

The most difficult part of the history of  
the life of the author is the  
history of the life of the author.  
The most difficult part of the history of  
the life of the author is the  
history of the life of the author.

THE



# The First R U L E

*Shewing both the Profit and Necessity of  
a pure Intention in all our Actions  
as also the Practise of Gods Di-  
vine Presence therein.*



W O things are principally necessary to the workman for making a true and perfect Building, to wit, his Eye for the choice of Materials, and the Rule or Square whereby to lay them in just proportion with right Symmetry and true Order in the Work. Now purity of intention is the Eye whereby directing our Actions to the honour of God they become meritorious and true Materials towards the happy building of our Salvation; and Gods Divine presence serves us as the Rule & Square whereby to keep them rightly ordered with the will of God, whom beholding we shall fear

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to offend, and thereby advance that happy Building in our Souls.

Wherefore, to use the method most conducing to these good Rules, I first propose these two important exercises before the rest, because the good or ill of all our Actions depending thereupon, it will be first fit to see both wherein they consist, as also how to practise the same. It is therefore a main point in Christianity to know that the Intention gives to all our Actions their true value in the sight of God, for as to give alms for his sake is a true vertue deserving eternal recompence; so likewise to give the same for vanity and worldly praise, is a sin much blamed in the Gospel by Jesus Christ; as likewise is the fast of Hypocrites, who fast and pray to gain esteem and honour in the sight of men.

Mat. 6.

True purity therefore of Intention is to all our Actions as Salt is to Meat, and as our very Soul is to the Body, for without it no action can avail us towards Heaven: It is as the Kings Stamp to the Coin from whence the true value is taken, or as his Seal which gives to the Patent all its force and authority. For as a right intention renders our giving a cup of cold water meritorious of Life everlasting, even so the most glorious act we can do with nothing avail our Souls without it. By this purity of Intention all our actions must be regulated for their Spiritual perfection; and to hit right upon this happy mark we first must level (as doth the Archer) by a little pause to take aim in the beginning of all we do, to direct it to the glory of God, and as he also winks with his left Eye to hinder

under the dissipation of his sight, and aims on-  
 ly with the right; so Christian perfection re-  
 quires that we, shutting our hearts to all sinister  
 and vain respects, should place our whole view  
 and right attention upon God and for the ac-  
 complishment of his most holy will: for what  
 not referred thereunto is but lost and in vain,  
 whereas the least thought or deed accompanied  
 with that holy motive, *for the love of God*, will Mat. 10.  
 have no lesse than Paradise for its reward: And  
 therefore with what care and diligence ought we  
 to practise this fruitful exercise, and to make it  
 our first morning act, thereby to consecrate all  
 our thoughts, words and deeds of that day for  
 the glory of God, to the end that if vain glory  
 or any other ill suggestion shall present it self,  
 we may more easily repeal them as coming too  
 late, and after so much better an Owner hath  
 taken his possession therein. *How should we*  
 This general and habitual intention in our  
 morning practise, must be gently seconded by  
 frequent-like acts in the beginning of all our  
 chief actions in the day, by briefly offering them  
 to God and humbly craving that we no waies  
 offend him thereby: For all which a small time  
 may suffice, either by an elevation of the heart  
 unto God, or by devout ejaculations, saying,  
*For thy sake, O Lord, it is that I do this, that I make*  
*this visit, that I eat, that I pray, that I suffer, or that*  
*I do this action*, and the like; and as it was the pri-  
 mitive custome, so still it continues amongst  
 vertuous people to begin their actions with the  
 sign of the Crosse, thereby to renew the purity of  
 their intention in doing them (as Saint Paul

1 Cor. 10. commands us ) for the glory of God.

*Job. 4.* This purity must be the motive and final end of whatsoever we do : And as it was the spiritual food of our Sovereign Lord Jesus to do the will of his heavenly Father ; so it is to be the first course for the feast of a vertuous soul, as likewise the middle service and the last whereon to feed.

This pure intention for the glory of God (by doing his heavenly will) is the mark at which both Prince and Prelate, both rich and poor we all must aim; yea, all our employments, whether for gains or for pleasure, whether in a secular or in a religious State of life; be it Preacher Teacher or Student, be it Magistrate in peace or be it Soldier for whatsoever he is to execute in war, all must be regulated by this un-erring Rule of a pure Intention to please God by doing his blessed will; this holy sauce gives us pleasing relish to the distastful bits which either Christian or religious mortification can present to our recoiling nature; this powerful and divine ingredient (*the love of God*) so sweetens all as I dare in all confident humility here promise in Gods behalf, that no Lay Brother or Sister in their most laborious employments, nor yet those of the Quire by any more painful & spiritual exercises, nor finally any other of what calling or condition soever who shall but be faithful in this holy practise, will ever perish under the oppression of so blessed a burthen and which Divine Truth himself hath so faithfully promised to make both sweet and light to all such as by avoiding sin shall comply with his heavenly will.

The

This is the un-erring Square and certain Rule whereby to regulate whatsoever we do, and as the meanest action which is but answerable thereunto is of inestimable value, so all that corresponds not to this holy Rule is but corruption of nature and filth, for the sink of Hell.

O what great folly then is it in man so carelessly to neglect the opportunity of this present life, to gain with such facility a treasure which is infinite, and whilest with great toil and vexing pain he wearies out himself in fruitlesse labours after the vain pleasures and deceitful wealth and honours of this world, he might with much lesse labour make his works so grateful unto God, as that the least good word or action proceeding but from a pure intention for the honour and love of God, it most undoubtedly would far excel in estimation of true worth and excellency (were it to be purchased by a price) all the treasure within the whole compass of nature. And the reason is most evident; for nature, with all it comprehends within its sphere, can no waies equalize in worth and true desert, the least supernatural degree neither of Grace nor of Glory, which yet is purchased by the least good work done purely for the love of God: and who can then sufficiently esteem the excellency of such a work, whose reward is both infinite, and the enjoyment of God himself for all eternity in the other life; whilest likewise also in this it not only giveth to our soul a certain sweet peace and joy, which even naturally doth accompany every good action,



tion but it will minister also and doth much  
facilitate the habit of vertue, and by an inter-  
ofunction we find thereby our passions more  
moderated, our imagination more fixed, our un-  
derstanding more enlightened, our will more  
enlained to God, and finally our selves en-  
abled with cheerful alacrity to exercise the li-  
beral acts of vertue; whereas by doing our ac-  
tions according to the sinful propension of our  
corrupt & vicious nature, we find all quite to the  
contrary; vertue unpleasant, our minds trou-  
bled, our souls defiled, and all practise of vertue  
to be ungrateful to us, all which now being more  
true, why do we thus fondly lose this our most  
precious time and gracious opportunity in  
labouring after toys and worldly vanities; O  
brutal stupidity to be so little sensible of so  
great a losse! whilst by each moment of this  
present life we might be able with so very great  
ease to purchase everlasting beatitude.

O let us therefore whilst acceptable time, and  
the daies of health is afforded us, let us redeem  
our former folly by using some short pause,  
whereby to frame a pure intention, (to our Spi-  
ritual actions at least) which otherwise of them-  
selves have neither true goodnesse nor worth,  
but as they do take it from a good and pure in-  
tention, whereby they become grateful to God,  
in that we do them to his honour and glo-  
ry.

By all which it sufficiently appears, of what  
importance it is to prefix a pure intention to  
whatsoever we do, that being the Soul, the Form  
& very Essence which gives both life and value  
there-



merit for according to our intention it  
will be esteemed either good or bad in the sight  
of God; how deceitful soever it may appear to  
the eyes of men: as truly the gift of a cup of  
cold water may well seem but a very small mar-  
ket to us, which yet being given with a true  
motive of Charity it will be eternally reward-  
ed in Heaven, whereas the lofty Pharisees who  
cast whole handfulls of money into the trunk of  
the Temple was nothing valued in the esteem  
of Jesus Christ himself, in comparison of the  
poor Widdows two farthings which she gave  
with a pure intention for the honour of God:  
yea, most evident it is that the Act which we shall  
do in grace and by the pure motive of Charity  
far surpasseth what either wit or science are a-  
ble to produce, and is far to be preferred be-  
fore any other Act; yea though the conversion  
of whole Nations, and the eternal blisse both  
of Angels and men should depend thereupon,  
for all that (in respect of what concerns the glo-  
ry of God) belongs to an infinitely inferior or-  
der and can admit no degree of comparison: no,  
the only sacred name of Jesus religiously pro-  
nounced by the just, and in the holy Ghost, ex-  
cels beyond all proportion, the value of the  
highest excellency within the bounds of all  
created nature.

Let none be therefore discouraged at the  
meanness of his own ability, or in that he con-  
ceives himself but an unprofitable creature; for  
who but purely loveth God with all his heart,  
he doth to him undoubtedly the gratefulest  
service which either man or Angel can perform,

he hath no need of us for execution of his designs; and therefore trouble not your self for want of force to serve him as you would, but joy in that by purity of Intention and true conformity your service is according to his own desire, which is of all most grateful to himself, and best for you; And therefore considering as well the great profit as also the precise necessity of prefixing this holy Intention both to our prayers & to whatsoever we do; let us frequently in the day and at the beginning of all our chief Actions renew our morning oblation thereof, and directing our heart unto God, let us renounce our own proper satisfaction and will to unite it to Gods, craving humbly his divine grace that we never do any thing contrary thereunto; In fine, all our thoughts, words and deeds must be offered unto God in union, honour, and adoration, and in the Spirit, Intention, and disposition of all the sacred Actions of *Jesus Christ*; in whose regard they will be made acceptable and admitted in expiation of sin.

Take special great heed that no corrupt Intention blast that happy fruit of your Actions; and be very wary of the subtle poison of vain glory, self love, and proper satisfaction, which is the ruine and destruction of all spiritual profit in the soul; regard not the sight, nor censure of any man; but consider that only of God, who both rewards and punishes, not only in this world, but also eternally in the other; recall with true sorrow the many lost Actions of your life past for want of true purity of Intention,  
and

and direct them hereafter in union of that  
 Divine Intention whereby our Lord and Ma-  
 ster Jesus Christ did honour his heavenly Fa-  
 ther in all his actions, during the whole course  
 both of his Life and death, for he being our  
 original Prototype and Divine Model we ought  
 thereby to frame our Actions, and to imitate  
 in the best we can.

Examine now well by the premisses how far  
 you have been faulty for what is past, and  
 with hearty repentance propose (by God's  
 grace) to be more careful for the time to come,  
 and endeavouring by many fervent aspirations,  
 frequently to offer up all your actions to God,  
 have humbly his heavenly help that they may  
 be both begun and ended to his greater glory,  
 and that you may be sooner struck by Death it-  
 self, than consent deliberately to offend his Di-  
 vine Majesty by any grievous sin.

## The second Part

*of this Rule shewing that the memory of  
 Gods Divine presence is a main incite-  
 ment to Vertue, and a great curb to  
 all Vice.*

**P**urity of Intention can no waies be better  
 seconded than by the help of this ensuing  
 part of God's Divine presence, for who well con-  
 siderers that he is the beholder of whatsoever we  
 do

do; as it must needs on the one side encourage and exceedingly excite him to direct all his actions to the glory of him who is so bountiful a Rewarder; so likewise on the other, it will no less deter him from offending in his presence who can punish us both temporally in this world, and eternally in the other; & that without all hope of appeal; *I have kept thy Commandments, &c.* (saith holy David) because all my waies are in thy sight: he gives the presence of God as the true reason and means by the help wherof he kept Gods holy Law. *Doubt he not consider all my waies, and even reckon all my steps* (saith Job 31. And who but seriously reflecting thereupon would dare or presume to sin.

This was that strong Buckler which defended chaste Joseph and Susanna in those dangerous temptations wherewith they were assaulted, for much better it is for me without the Act (said she) *Dan. 13.* to fall into your hands, than to sin in the sight of our Lord. This was the Rule which God himself prescribed to holy Abraham as a principal means for attaining to high perfection; *walk before me, and be perfect*; as if he had said, remember I oversee thee in all things, and thy deeds will be perfect: the reason hereof is most manifest; for as the over-seeing sight of a severe Judge doth very powerfully restrain us from offending; so on the contrary nothing doth so much encourage and incite the Soldier to generous deeds as the sight of his King, or General, who can abundantly reward him; and therefore it well appears how effectual a means this holy practise of Gods divine presence now is for the perfect and

and crime's accomplishment of true Christian  
Justice; it deterring us most powerfully from  
that great evil of sin on the one side, and it in-  
spiring us also strongly on to do good by the pra-  
ctice of virtue on the other; which are the two  
essential parts of this holy Justice, and are as  
two wings to the soul; whereof if either be  
wanting, the other will little avail her to  
mount up to her heavenly Bliss.

It now well then appears both how necessary  
this holy practise is to direct all our actions ac-  
cording to the will of God, as also how need-  
ful to curb our unruly passions, and to mode-  
rate the disordered affections of our mind; fi-  
nally it serves as a severe and awful Master to  
deter the boldest sinner from offending him;  
who hath such power not only to inflict all tem-  
poral punishment upon him in this world, but  
also to condemn him both body and soul to the  
eternal flames of Hell. All which being manifest,  
it remains that I endeavour to declare how this  
Divine presence of God may be conceived by  
us, and by what means it ought to be practised;  
for both which you may observe that,

The first good help whereby to conceive the  
Divine presence of God, is firmly to believe  
with St. Paul, that God is not far from us, for we  
live, we move, and we are in him; yea so absolute-  
ly sustain by his support, as should he withdraw  
his sustaining hand, all Creatures would return  
to their former nothing; from whence he first  
extracted them; So that we are not only in-  
wardly replenished with him, but he also en-  
compasseth us on every side; for *Dei Flamm*

and

28. 17.



and Earth are filled with thy glory, and in some manner as in the Element of the Air which encompasses us all about, and is every where though not perceived by us, so also is God present to all his Creatures; *Nunquid non Caelum & terram ego impleo dicit Dominus*, yea he is more intimately present to us, than is our soul, because he is the very Essence of our souls, there giving to it not only the operations which it makes in the body, but even the existence and proper being of them both; for thou O Lord dost all my Actions; nor is it I, but the grace of God with me: where the Apostle attributing his Actions much rather to Gods operation in him, than to his own, by good consequence he was there present to them, as St. *Augustine* did well conceive, when he so greatly rebuked himself for having laboured to seek God abroad in other creatures, whom he so intimately enjoyed within himself at home, wherefore do I so much desire (saith he) that thou shouldst come to me, seeing that I could not be unless thou wert in me.

A second good expedient for this holy practise of Gods divine presence is to contemplate his continual benefits, which as the prime and principal cause he communicates to us by the instrumental means of his other Creatures, as light by the Sun, heat by the fire, nourishment by our food, respiration by the air, and all the rest both Corporal and Spiritual benefits, which as by conveying Conduits we receive from his own bountiful hands, as the same St. *Augustine* did likewise acknowledge, when giving his

imme-

immediate thanks to God for that first nourishment, which his Divine goodnesse had so providently conveyed to him by those tender breasts of his loving Nurse, and therefore (with his blessed Saint) due gratitude also exacts of us to keep the eye of our Soul upon so continual a Benefactor, who principally works with his Creatures all the good we receive by them, though not to be perceived by our corporal eyes, no more than we can either behold our Soul or the Air, both which notwithstanding be real true substances, and are actually present with us; for otherwise we could neither act nor live.

Thirdly, for the more easie comprehending both the manner and reality of Gods divine presence, some fitly resemble it to the beams of a bright shining Sun upon a clear transparent Christal, wherein nothing on any side either within or without is hidden from the eye, yea the least mote or stain within the secrett part of it appears as clear as the very outside of the same: in the like condition are all Creatures whatsoever in respect of God, to whom the darkest and profoundest corners within the bowels of the earth, and the most secret thoughts of our minds and consciences lie more open than doth a clear Christal to the shining Sun; which though it may justly give subject of great terror to the wicked, yet the vertuous soul may much rejoice to be continually in the view of so loving a Father and of so powerfully a protecting Lord.

We



- We being now sufficiently assured of this divine presence (whereof Faith permits us not to doubt) I will here also briefly endeavour to shew what profit may be drawn from this certain truth (and which ought greatly to joy a good Christian heart) to have for an eye-witness of all we do that Sovereign Lord, who beholding both our thoughts words and deeds, rewards the least of them eternally (it being done for his sake) for this undoubtedly must needs strongly incite a grateful heart to aspirations both of love and gratitude, as also to fear and reverence, whereby the vertuous Soul unites her self more closely to his sacred presence; and labouring thus to gain a holy habit of this divine exercise, she breaths forth fervent and affectionate ejaculations, as fiery darts cast up unto God from an enamoured soul enflamed with love, without Art, yet with an ardent desire, and tender feeling, she craves with the Kingly Prophet, sometimes for pardon of her sins, and for grace to amend, sometimes to be freed from a predominant vice, from some evil habit, or unruly passion, sometimes to obtain such virtues as may make her most grateful to God, sometimes by blessing, praising, and adoring his divine goodness; when abroad in the Fields, or Gardens she beholds the Sun, the Elements, the great Fabrick of this world, or any other Creature either of Heaven or Earth which that Almighty Creator hath made for the use of Man. Finally, by raising her heart to God in producing the holy acts of fervent Love, of detestation of sin, of profound humility of perfect

est conformity, of willing patience, and to conclude, by such other Acts of Vertue as occasion and divine inspiration may best suggest: for by this good means the Soul preserves her self in a continual practise of Gods heavenly presence, she greatly prevents the worst temptations of her ghostly enemy, and by thus gaining this holy habite of Gods divine presence, with joy and great ease, she obtains holy grace to practise such vertues as be most needfull for her perfection in his divine service, and she worketh her eternal salvation thereby.

But to reduce this so important a point to an easie and very profitable practise, it is here first to be observed that the chiefest difficulty in this holy exercise consists in the beginning and very first practise thereof; and therefore to gain facility in practising the lively memory of Gods living presence, your first endeavour must be to have both a good will and true desire to obtain it: for a holy desire is both assisted by grace, and is also a powerful spur to nature for the applying all fitting endeavour to obtain what is desired.

2. We must crave it of God by very hearty and earnest prayer, as being a perfect gift descending from the Father of Light, from which holy Fountain we must expect it much rather than from any humane Act or Industry.

But I must not omit here to give you as a most necessary advertisement, that you begin to practise this holy exercise gently and by degrees, with all prudent moderation: First calling Gods presence to mind at each striking of the Clock,

Glock, then after endeavour the same at the beginning and end of all your chiefest actions; for by often iterated acts habits are begotten, and this exercise, which at the first seems tedious and difficult, by perseverance and practise becomes both pleasing and very easie to be renewed in all the rest of your actions, God being ever present in all places, and therefore most easie to be found.

It is also to be well observed, that some by imtemperate fervour exceeding in this holy exercise the due limits of discretion, and straining the faculty of their imagination above its power, by labouring actually to exercise a continual presence of God, they much weaken the head, and render themselves thereby unprofitable for other duties of obligation; which is a  
*Wisd. 10.* most convincing argument that it proceeds not from the Spirit of God; that, being truly gentle and sweet; and leadeth none to such immoderate extremities, which are but the effects of our own satisfaction, and not of the true love of God; which is never to be found destitute of solid true wisdom and prudence.

You have now here seen both how necessary and very profitable this holy exercise of Gods divine presence is for all such as aspire to Christian perfection. It remains that I conclude this Rule by shewing briefly, what exceeding great harm the neglect thereof doth cause both to body and Soul, it being most certain and manifest, that as the memory of Gods divine presence mainly deters us from sin, so likewise the neglect thereof is most truly accounted the very  
 source,

source, and fountain of all impiety; for God is  
 not before the eyes of the wicked, (saith the holy  
 King) and therefore all their waies are filled with  
 sin: For from hence proceeds their boldnesse,  
 and temerity in offending him: The source and  
 original cause of all the lewd and sinful cour-  
 ses of the Prodigal child in the Gospel, pro-  
 ceeded from his abandoning his loving Fathers  
 House, and withdrawing himself from his pre-  
 sence, and over-seeing sight; that happy bri-  
 dle and restraint of all licentious liberty: to  
 the want of which, the Prophet Ezek. attri-  
 butes the enormous wickednesse of *Hierusalem*;  
 and for the self same reason a sinner is most tru-  
 ly qualified by the Holy Ghost, *a fool, because* *Psal. 52:*  
*in his heart he saith there is no God*: That publick  
 sinner *THAIS*, being happily struck by a  
 serious reflection of Gods beholding the foul-  
 nesse of her offences, she thereupon forsook her  
 sinful course, and retiring to a penitential life,  
 she ended the rest of her daies in great repen-  
 tance and sanctity: *Servavi mandata tua & te-*  
*stimonium tua quia omnes via mee in conspectu tuo.* *Pf. 118:*  
 This was the happy effect of Gods divine pre-  
 sence, remembered by that holy Penitent; and  
 doubtlesse should we but lively conceive the  
 same, it would oblige us to much more reve-  
 rence, and devout respect at our prayers, as al-  
 so to refrain from offending in other occasions,  
 that dreadful and all over-seeing Majesty: for  
 the two principal effects in this holy practise ac-  
 cording to *St. Thomas*, are *fear and reverence*;  
 because we regard this our sovereign Lord ei-  
 ther as our Father or Judge; if as a Father,  
 our

our due respect and reverence detains us from displeasing him: And if as a Judge, we fear his dreadful chastisement: who beholding both our thoughts and deeds, will require an exact account for every moment of our life, and of the least idle word we shall speak: which being seriously considered, this belief of Gods presence must needs be a restraining curb to sin, supposing that our faith of it be practical and answerable in action and good effects to what we believe; for a meer speculative Faith, whereby we barely believe Gods Presence only, that the very Devils do also believe as well as we, and tremble thereat without availing them, but *he only rightly believeth* (saith holy St. Greg.) *who practiseth what he believeth*. For what would it avail us to believe that there is a God, who ordaineth Heaven to reward the good, and Hell to chastise the wicked, should we not practise vertue to gain the one, and fly sin to avoid the other? no, Faith is not given us barely to know, or to understand the mysteries only of our Christianity, but much rather to practise according to what we believe; which not doing, we shall be as far from obtaining our beatitude, as he would be to enjoy the hidden treasure (though revealed) but yet would take no pains at all to digg for it, and therefore he would gain nothing, but great shame and confusion for his stupid sloath and negligence. It is the very same with all carelesse and sinful Christians, who both knowing and firmly believing Gods Presence with them, yet testifie neither fear, nor respect of that so dreadful a Majesty; nor will use the least  
 painful



painful endeavour, by the holy practise of vertue, to gain that precious treasure of his Divine Grace, whom yet we conceive they are present to reward, or to punish us eternally, according to our just desert. You have now had in this present Rule the Theory of Gods Divine Presence, and by which is only laid the foundation whereon this next is to build, by reducing the former unto practise which is the proper subject of

## The second

# R V L E

*Regulating all our actions from our up-rising until we go to bed.*

THE former Rule informing our understanding with that great Truth of God's Divine Presence, it is but requisite, that by this the will should be excited to the holy practise of rendering to his sacred Majesty, due honour and homage by all our Actions of the day; for he having so mercifully redeemed us from eternal thralldom, by the price of his dearest blood, both Justice and gratitude makes all our actions (by an infinite degree) more due unto him, than any Prince or Parent can pretend from either Child or ransomed Slave.

And to perform our duty rightly hertin to him, by the practise of this good Rule, it mainly imports us to begin well the day, to which the remainder doth so usually correspond: And therefore with a special care we ought to sanctifie our first uprising thoughts and actions, by some vertuous practise, they giving so great an impression to all our ensuing deeds of the day.

First then, so soon as you are fully awake, having taken convenient rest, and your usual repose, it being also now your time to rise (and no incommmodity nor indisposition being offered to hinder you) make presently the sign of the Crosse, thereby to invoke the Divine assistance of the most blessed Trinity, through the merits of Christs holy Passion, and at the first morning light appearing to your eies, salute with all cordial reverence and devotion that bright heavenly Sun of justice, **JESUS CHRIST**, saying, *O sweet Jesus, the true light of our Souls, illuminate my understanding I beseech thee, and enframe my will, to the end that I may know thee, love thee, and serve thee, both this day and evermore.*

And for the better beginning of the day, endeavour also to give God your first action thereof, by a vertuous act of mortification, shaking off all sloath and drowzinesse, that would detain you with losse of pretious time, which holy act you may offer to God as the first fruit of that new day, most due to him, and so very grateful, as it may purchase a happy blessing upon all the rest you shall do therein. Finally, omit



not to acknowledge; with due gratitude; for his so graciously preserving you that might have been all evil, as also his great mercy in affording you the good beginning of that day, wherein by his grace, you may negotiate the most important work of your Salvation; by loving and serving him with much more care and fidelity than formerly you have done.

Secondly, in farther thankfulness for his so innumerable great benefits; offer your self entirely both body and soul, with all their powers and senses to his heavenly Majesty; and all your Actions, both interior, and exterior of that day, to the end that he may wholly dispose of you, both in life and death, to his own greater glory: And protest that together with all the Saints and Angels in Heaven, and with all other Creatures upon earth, you desire to love, to praise, and to adore him by all and every Action whatsoever; yea, by each motion of your eyes, hands, or feet, and by every breath you draw; for by this holy practise, you shall happily associate your self with all his other, both celestial and terrestrial, blessed Creatures, in all their religious Actions of love, praise, and homage, which they render to God, to whom in vertue of that your holy intention, all your Actions will be acceptable, you virtually both loving, praising, and adoring him thereby.

And finally, by this vertuous practise, you will unite all your endeavours, with those who praise him best, and by a special manner communicate with them, and also contribute to all

the honour and glory, which shall be actually rendered him both in Heaven and Earth.

Thirdly, crave his divine grace to preserve you that day from all grievous sin, and purpose firmly on your part, to avoid all such occasions, as former frailties may give you just cause to fear; resolving in particular, most carefully to shun that sin, to which you find your self most subject, and to exercise the Acts of that vertue which most opposeth the same; add also to this an Act of oblation to God, of a most willing acceptance for his love, of all crosses, and troubles which may happen that day, and during your whole life; Renounce all evil temptations to sin, all inclinations to pride, and self-love, all inordinate passions, and unruly affections, which may present themselves that day to you: for by this act, God will be glorified in all your sufferings, you having so willingly accepted them for his love; and by this means you may also obtain a Divine blessing, and grace to resist all temptations to those sins, which for his love you did formerly renounce and dis-avow; and in case, that by frailty, you shall transgress against your morning good purpose, yet this renouncing Act not being revoked, your intention stands good, and your transgression involuntary, and thereby will either not be criminal in the sight of God, or at least the malice of it will be greatly diminished.

Fourthly, raise fervently your heart and mind to God, and treat with him the chief necessities of your Soul by holy prayer, which is as needful to a spiritual Life, and for advancement

ment in vertue, as is the water to growing plants. Beg humbly his divine light, to understand his blessed will, and to enable you by his grace to perform the same, which preparation to your Prayer being made.

Fifthly, compose yourself devoutly in the place of Prayer, as in the divine presence of God, where, upon your knees, first humbly, and lowly bow or kisse the ground, in acknowledgment that you are earth, to which you must return; as also in humble and grateful memory of the most blessed incarnation of the Son of God; Adore his Divine presence, who became man for our Redemption: next making the sign of the holy Crosse upon your forehead, mouth, and breast, (as sealing and shutting up thereby the door of your heart against all profane words, thoughts, and deeds for that time) retire your self into the secret cabinet of your soul, there privately to converse with him alone, as if there were no other, but only himself, and you in all the world.

Finally, conceive that day, as perchance the last that shall be lent you, wherein to work your salvation; which depending upon that state wherein your last action shall be done, O of how main importance it needs must be to make a serious reflection upon every act, which may prove perchance to be your last, & therefore an endless weal or wo depending thereupon: this holy, and most important morning practise, is able to make so very deep an impression in our hearts, and to continue so powerful an influence upon all the rest of our actions throughout

the whole day, as that no worldly affection, nor passion, nor any Creature whatsoever will be able to disorder that happy soul, which beginning the day with so wholesome a thought, shall frequently renew the same cogitation of death; no, rather *he will despise all mortal things who often remembreth that he must die*, as Saint Hier. by his own experience assures us; yea, by this happy practise of beginning the day with a holy memory of death, we shall be made careful of the dreadful accompt, which will be demanded of us at that uncertain hour, and then with joy we shall find the Roman Orator most truly to have said, *that it is the highest point of wisdom to do that living, which dying we would wish to have done*. And this practise would prove a most powerful antidote to preserve us from the deadly poison of sin.

Our morning preparation thus made, and our usual Prayers and Devotions performed with due reverence, we must then betake ourselves to such employments as our present condition shall require at our hands, calling often to mind for what end it was that God did create us, and doth still preserve us in this world; all which being only for his glory, and our own salvation, we must carefully direct all our actions accordingly, as being to render a most rigid accompt for every moment of this most precious time, which God hath lent us to negotiate with our talents for that end.

Now to be faithfully accomptable herein, I conceive it a singular good expedient, not only to regulate in this manner all our Actions of  
the

the day, but also to propose unto our selves a set order and distribution for the employment of the whole time thereof, according as our condition and calling may both admit and require of us, to Gods glory and our own souls health; for order is most pleasing to him, who created all things in order, measure, and weight. And it will prevent much idleness, as also tediousnesse to our minds, to both which they are exceeding subject, who propose not to themselves some due method for the employment of their time and affairs, which being rightly ordered they pass with much more content and ease.

This right order consists in the fit disposing of all our severall employments for the day, as for our morning and evening Prayers, and for all our other employments, as well temporal, as spiritual, sutable to our condition and leaseure. Regulating the time for reading, working, or corporal refection, for our recreation, or for such visits, and conversation, as either civility or charity may justly exact of us. In fine, we must observe an order and set time for all our affairs, so far as prudence and convenient fittingnesse will permit; Nor is it lesse convenient that we should stint, and discreetly regulate a due proportion, as well for our domestick expence, as also for all other occasions answerable to our condition and ability; allotting likewise for Alms, what may be fitting in due gratitude unto God; for this is that order (saith St. Aug.) which brings us to him, *that we do all things decently and according to order, and with* 1 Cor. 14.



a pure Intention for the glory of God: for hereby all our Actions will become grateful to his Heavenly Majesty, and meritorious of eternal reward: O let us not therefore omit to direct rightly our morning Intention, nor to propose unto ourselves some good employment for the day, which must not be consumed in idleness, nor in the vain and fruitlesse pastimes of meer prophane and worldly conversation.

By the first part of this Rule you have directions for your morning actions, whereby to regulate all the severall employments of the ensuing day: But to conclude rightly the day which we endeavoured well to begin, and to make that our morning oblation an entire Sacrifice to God, it will be requisite that we be careful to crown our mornings well beginning with as holy a good evening exercise at our going to bed, which I will endeavour (by God's grace) to propose unto you by

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## The second Part

*Of this Rule to be practised before our going to bed.*

**I**T is no lesse necessary to end well the day, than it was to begin rightly the same, and as needful to consecrate to God our last evening Actions as our first in the morning, and to  
this

his end, before we go to rest, we ought to conclude the day with this evening Exercise, as it is generally practised by the devouter sort of catholicks, retyring into our Oratory, or to the usual place of Prayer, so soon as fit time may require to dispose our selves to our rest; and here alone, or in company (as may be most expedient to our present condition) we may say the common Letanies of the Saints, with the ensuing Prayers, to which we may also add such other accustomed devotions, as time and place, or other circumstances shall require; and finally to conclude with a brief general examination of Conscience.

First, placing our selves with all reverence in the Divine presence of God, we must call to mind his innumerable benefits, craving his grace to remember our sins, and to detest them.

Secondly. We must examine our conversation, and the occasions which we have had that day to offend Almighty God, by thought, word, or deed, or by omission of such duties as our present calling requires at our hands, or the fidelity to our morning resolution; if not relapsed into our habitual and most predominant imperfection.

Thirdly. We must detest our sin, and humbly beg pardon, stirring up true sorrow for having offended so good a God, and purpose with a firm resolution by his Holy grace to amend, endeavouring by this means, to put our selves in that happy state, wherein we would be content to be found at the hour of death, which may best



best be done by these four brief ensuing Acts.

First, by an act of faith, firmly believing whatsoever God hath revealed to his holy Catholick Church, and for such as is by her proposed to us to be believed.

2ly. By an act of Divine hope, founded in Gods great goodnesse and faithful promises, and in the sacred merits of the bitter death and passion of Jesus Christ.

3ly. By an act of true charity, in loving God above all things, and for his sake, our Neighbour as our selves, forgiving truly whomsoever hath offended us.

Finally, conclude with an act of contrition, detesting from your heart all sin, because it is injurious to so great and good a God, which detestation of sin, and hearty repentance, may be made by this or some other like form.

It grieves me very sore, and I repent from my heart, dear Lord, for having offended thee my so loving, and my omnipotent God, whom I love above all things whatsoever, and I now firmly purpose (thy heavenly grace assisting me) never mortally to offend thee, but to confess with true repentant sorrow all my grievous sins, and with a firm purpose never wilfully to commit them any more, but to do my enjoined penance for the same, hoping in thy infinite mercy, that thou wilt pardon me through the merits of the most sacred death and passion of Jesus Christ, thy only Son, our most loving Redeemer.

These

these or the like devotions (before bed) being  
 ended, we must retire our selves in that devout  
 collection from all company, the best we can,  
 to our quiet repose, without dissipating our  
 heart by any farther needlesse discourse, or i-  
 ne conversation; but beginning to undresse our  
 selves, we must call to mind how death will  
 shortly bereave us of all worldly things, as of  
 honours, Wealth, Friends, Pleasures, and  
 what else soever we enjoy; we must make here  
 a true vertuous Act of perfect conformity to  
 Gods Heavenly pleasure, as a most willing sur-  
 render of all which is ours, to be freely disposed  
 of by him, both now and for eternity, saying; *Thess. 4.*  
*When shall I deuest my self, dear Jesu, and put*  
*off the old man with all my evil Acts, and sinful ha-*  
*bits, to the end I may be renewed in Spirit, and*  
*put on the new man, which according to God is crea-*  
*ted in Justice and holiness of life?* Consider that a  
 day will come for your uncloathing, never to  
 reuest your self again, when your last infirmity  
 (as the fore-runner of death) shall bring you  
 to your final lying down, and when (alas) un-  
 dresse our souls be found adorned with the holy  
 habits of vertue, we shall then appear (as did  
 our first unhappy Parents) naked and confound-  
 ed in the dreadful presence of God, and in  
 danger to be cast, not only with them, out of  
 the terrestrial Paradise, but out of Cœlestial bliss  
 for ever; which being a thing so justly formida-  
 ble, let us now use all fitting industry, whilst  
 we have time; for that dark night of death will  
 come suddenly upon us, and then no more  
 time will be granted to negotiate our salvation,  
 for

for on what side soever the tree of our life shall fall, there it must for ever remain.

*A reflection to be made when we enter into Bed.*

**W**E entering into bed may say, Lord Jesus, the eternal repose of thy elect, when will come the hour and time that my poor Soul may without end, receive her rest in thy eternal glory? being laid down in your bed, think with your self how sleep is the true resemblance of death, the bed represents your grave, the sheets your winding cloth, and the covering represents the earth which shall one day be cast upon your Corps, to cover them. And hereupon, making a serious reflection upon your own mortality, most humbly recommend your self to the divine protection of the sacred Trinity, saying, God the Father bless me, Jesus Christ defend and help me, the vertue of the Holy Ghost illuminate and sanctify me this night and evermore, Amen.

After this compose your self gently to sleep upon the consideration, that once you must lie down to rise no more, but by their hands who bear you to the Grave: nor have we any assurance but that very night may be the same; God's blessed providence so disposing it, that none shall know the coming of that dreadful hour, to the end that we should alwaies be ready, and prepared for it, with our Lamps of holy Faith, replenished with the Oyl of good works, expecting the call of our heavenly Spouse.

*A devout Practise to be used in the night  
when we cannot sleep.*

IT is a very good remedy to drive away evil  
fancies when we cannot sleep, to make some  
grateful elevation of our heart to God for his  
innumerable great benefits, and abundant  
provision of all fitting necessities; we having  
a soft bed, and well covered, whilst so many  
poor and needy Souls are forced to repose their  
hungry, bare, and wearied carcasses upon the  
hard ground, or perchance upon some little  
straw, without all other defence, against the  
great rigour both of hunger and cold, and yet  
their innocency and much merit may be likely  
to deserve far better all those great blessings  
than we.

Hence let us raise up again our hearts by  
some such fervent ejaculations as these; *O Jesu, be  
merciful unto me a Jesu, and save me O; my most mer-  
ciful Father, and dreadful Judge, am I now in  
what condition and state for my Conscience, where-  
in I should be content to be found at the hour of my  
death? O when shall I truly love thee with my whole  
heart and soul? Or as composing your self co-  
mely at the foot of the holy Crosse rehearse these  
blessed words which Jesus Christ pronounced  
thereupon to his heavenly Father: Father into  
thy hands I commend my Spirit. Recite this holy *Luke 23.*  
sentence with great fervour, love, and humili-  
ty, beseech him so to imprint it in your heart  
and soul, as that you may conclude your life,  
and*

and last breath, in pronouncing these sacred words, in union of that Intention and disposition, wherein Jesus Christ presented that last Prayer to his eternal Father, in that doleful Agony of his death: This done, without any farther straining your mind, compose your self again to sleep, endeavouring that your last interior act be ever of the love of God.

Thus much concerning the manner how a good Christian must retire to his nights repose, wherein, because the time for that daily examen of Conscience is usually but very short, therefore I thought it requisite to adjoin hereto a larger method, for such devout souls as frequent the Sacrament of penance with accustomed piety: for as a faithful Steward, to keep right his accompt besides his daily reckoning, he weekly, or monthly at least makes a general review of the accompt to be given to his Lord; so it is no lesse necessary, that besides this daily brief form of examen, I here also propose a method for a longer reckoning, and which may help to reduce to mind the total sum of our principal offences, since our last confession, and therewithal to shew what preparation and disposition is most necessary to this Sacrament of holy penance, and how to avoid some great errors, which through sinful ignorance, may oftentimes be committed therein. To begin therefore in good order, we must in the first place set down,



*In examen of Conscience, for such as in a vertuous course of life, do aim at perfection, and do often frequent with devotion the holy Sacraments.*

**T**O know rightly our selves, true penance layeth the best foundation, which no waies is better practised, than by a diligent examen of our Conscience, and what sin we have committed, without which we can do nothing available to the right order of Penance: For as it is impossible to move our hearts to true sorrow for such sins as we do not know, so how should we be able to confesse them, unless we first know what they are, by the review of a diligent examen of our Conscience; which being so absolutely necessary to stir up true sorrow, and firm purpose to amend, without which no mortal sin can be pardoned us: you plainly see how greatly it imports us to know how to make well this our examen of Conscience, whereon our salvation doth so mainly depend.

This ensuing brief method, containing but in general the chief heads of such vices, as who, aiming at perfection in a vertuous course of life, may be subject frequently to fall into, as also the most usual frailties, to which the just in this life are not wholly exempt, sufficing for this intent I leave the longer form to be read in several books of devotion, as being more necessary for them who but seldom frequent the Sacrament of holy Penance.

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The



The method now for this Examen is (as before) first devoutly upon your knees, and in the presence of God, to adore him in your heart, and crave his grace to call your sins to mind, and truly to detest them.

2ly. To give thanks for his innumerable benefits, for preserving you from so many dangers, and for affording you so good leisure to make your happy peace with him, and gracious means to obtain that endlesse blisse for which he hath created you, though most ungratefully you have so often, and most enormously offended this your so infinitely merciful and most loving God.

3ly. Examine in particular what sins you have committed by thought, by word, by deed, or by omission, whereof the world, the flesh, or the Diuel, may be able to accuse you, whether you have broken any of Gods Commandments, or of those of his Spoule the holy Catholick Church; whether you have offended by any of the seaven deadly sins, or by any of your five corporall senses: And in particular, if failed in the duty of your present state and condition.

Examine what has happened in your conversation of that day, wherein you may have offended God, either in thought, by vanity, by anger, by pride, by presumption, by revenge, by rash judgment, by disdain, by envie, or the like.

In words: either immodest, or impudent, or disdainful, or proud, or disobedient, or uncharitable, or injurious, or untrue, or blasphemous,

phemous, or ungodly, and the like.

By deeds : examine well our conscience of all our sinful acts, and observe with diligence your own vicious inclinations, and disordered passions, and affections, which most incline you to sin, and principally make good reflection upon those faults committed against your resolution, made that day in your morning Prayer; As also upon such affected venial sins, as are frequently committed by deliberate and free consent, of which sort are idle and unprofitable words, trifling untruths, slight contempt or reversion, small calumnies, murmuration against superiors, and others, sloath to resist distractions in Prayer; Negligence and coldnesse in requesting Sacraments, and all other devotions; doing all rather by custom, and without fruit, for want of reverence and vertuous endeavours; vanity and secret self esteem; too much inclination and industry to seek our own ease and commodity : neglecting our Christian perfection; self love in our actions; pride or sloath; cold in the love of God; too much affection to creatures, voluntarily distracted in Prayers; Not faithful in good resolutions; neglect of Gods inspirations; impatient in afflictions; made debate by reports; discovered others faults against charity; eat, or drunk intemperately; not rightly sanctified with devotion the Sabbath and holy daies; if used any vain or false Oath; if willful or disobedient to superiors; if mocked, scorned, or borne ill will to others; if struck, or wished harm, if crossed, or contradicted, on set purpose to vex, and

put others out of patience; if taken, or desired what belonged unto others; unchast, unmodest, or unpure thoughts, words, or actions; rash Judgment, false suspicion, or detraction.

All which now being but well pondered by a serious Examination: who dare, or will be able to say, that he can find no matter for frequent confession; seeing that the holiest man alive will find himself daily defiled with several blemishes of those sinful stains: and therefore to have need of this Sacramental lavature of confession to purifie the same.

But I must here seriously re-commend to you this necessary advertisement for your Examen before your confession; wherein, although you must be serious, and very diligent, yet free from anxious, and over scrupulous disquiet of mind. First, carefully examine, whether since your last confession, your Conscience accuse you of any mortal sin, and if it be guilty but of venial, then let your Examen and Confession also be chiefly concerning your daily and most habitual faults, which you are most bound to amend of which kind, those are, which cause greatest remorse to your Conscience; which hinder your progresse in vertue, and which are most contrary to the vocation and state of life wherein you live: or those finally, to the confession of which you find most repugnance, and wherein unto you have greatest inclination. For it well to be observed, that by this manner of Examen, and Confession of those our principally affected sins (taking as by task to amend them

them) the grace of the Sacrament is much more abundantly obtained; than it by a long scrupulous search and tedious confession we should labour to find out all our meanest frailty, and least venial sins: for thereby we so spend the whole force of our Spirit; as that small attention can be had to make, with true repentance, good resolutions of amendment, according to which, notwithstanding it is, that we receive grace in this holy Sacrament; and not according to the time, or toil, which we employ in too unquiet Examinations, or in long and scrupulous confessions; wherein, though it be not needful to confesse all our venial frailties, yet we must be truly sorrowful for them all, and purpose to amend them; which is the chiefest point, and best disposition to a profitable confession: declaring our sins, not as by custome only, and after one set form still repeating the same, and in such general terms, as the greatest Saints alive are not free; we must therefore accuse our selves, only of such things in particular as most require amendment; expressing them so humbly, clearly and briefly as we can; assuring our selves, that the longest confessions are not alwaies the best, but those which are made with most repentance and truest purpose to amend.

Finally, stir up your self to true hearty contrition, for all your sins, crave humbly pardon of God for them; purposing, with a firm resolution (by Gods holy grace) to amend, and to confesse them with hearty sorrow at the next fitting time, and conclude with an act of contri-

contrition, from a true repentant heart, detesting all your sin: which Act, as with very powerful motives may be stirred up by these ensuing considerations.

1. First, by well pondering his extraction, as well of body, as of soul, that commits this heinous crime, to wit, a poor abject man, a contemptible worm, yea, very dust and ashes.

2. Secondly, Who is he that is offended? to wit, God Omnipotent, infinitely good, powerful, Just, and merciful, who hath both created, and continually preserves us, pouring down innumerable benefits upon us most ungrateful creatures.

3. 3ly. To consider the bitter death and passion of Jesus Christ, which he suffered to pay the dear ransome of our wretched sin.

4. 4ly. To ponder well the most funell and curst effects of sin, whereby (if mortal) we lose Gods grace, which is the true life of our soul, and of being the children of God, we become Children and Slaves of the Devil: We forfeit Heaven, and become liable to the everlasting flames of Hell: the greatnesse and very horror whereof, is most extreemly formidable, yea, even to imagine, but by a serious thought.

5. 5ly. To consider for how unworthy a gain, and small content, in satisfying some fond curiosity, some sensual, brutal, or unruly passion, we renounce our eternal felicity.

6. 6ly. To consider that true contrition hath two different faces; with the one it looks upon sin now past, and detests it; with the second,



it considers sin as in danger to be committed, and firmly resolves to avoid it, without which purpose no true contrition can be had.

7ly. Our good purposes must be efficacious, and with constant resolution to fly all willful sin, as also the immediate occasions thereof: for *velites* only, with weak and imperfect desires, produce not the true Spirit of contrition and repentance for our sins: out of all which considerations may well now be fram'd thus a right act of contrition: I detest my sins, and repent from the bottom of my heart, for that thereby I have offended my God, whom I love above all other things created; I hope to obtain pardon, by the merits of my dear Saviour, Jesus Christ, most firmly purposing by the help of his holy grace to amend, and with true contrition to confesse my sin.

And if now after all these motives, you have not the sence, nor feeling of contrition, as you would, yet be you not therefore troubled in your mind, for that is a good sign that you have true contrition, which is not placed in the sence, but in the will: depose therefore that disquiet upon Gods great mercy, beseeching him, that what is wanting on your part, may be supplied by the tears of *Jesus Christ*, and of the merits of his sacred passion, in expiation of our sins.

You have had here a brief examen of Conscience, proposed for the use of such vertuous souls, as ayming at perfection, endeavour to avoid with careful diligence all mortal sin, though not exempt from many venial, which



neglected are very dangerous, and dispose to mortal; especially if so affected as that we neither much desire to be freed of them, nor endeavour to make fitting resistance, and though such venial sin do not deprive us of Gods blessed friendship, yet they greatly weaken in us his grace, and cool true charity, and like to a lingering sicknesse, which though not mortal of itself, yet it maketh way to some greater malady, which infallibly bringeth death. Moreover (and which is most to be feared) it obstructeth the influence of Gods peculiar and extraordinary helping grace, which should support us in time of temptation, which failing in our necessity (in due punishment of our effected sin) we fall for want of that preventing grace by divine inspirations, and of extraordinary efficacious helps, which should have strengthened and defended us; and therefore by holy wisdom we are advertised, that *of sin forgiven we be not without fear*; for though the guilt may be forgiven, yet they may be punished by the privation of Gods extraordinary exciting, and preventing efficacious grace; the want whereof may be the cause of our perdition; upon which very consideration alone, many great Saints have been moved to make long and very severe great penance for their meer venial sins; for which they so much feared, that God would punish them by the abstraction of such his extraordinary, and efficacious grace.

I must not omit here also to advertise you of another pernicious effect, of affected venial sin, no lesse to be feared than any; which is; that it greatly

greatly cooleth all fervour in devotion ; it renders us sloathful in piety, and causeth distaste in all spiritual exercises ; and thence, by degrees, we fall into the dangerous state of *tepidity* ; and to be neither hot , nor cold, which is so very highly and above all the rest , most displeasing to God. Apoc: 3.

By this luke warm state, a soul is not yet so ill, as to consent to mortal sin : though it hath but small scruple for venial : and being sloathful, and negligent in the holy service of God ; it is as carelesse to advance in any vertue or devotion. It may be, one, who daily hears Mass, yea, and often frequents the Sacraments, he may perchance use Meditation, and many other good Exercises of devotion ; he may seem humble, whilst none shall neglect him, mild, and courteous to all he loves ; patient, so long as none contradicts him ; and finally, he useth his devotion according to his own best liking, and fancy.

Let us now seriouslie lay hand upon heart ; trulie examining our own Consciences in what rank we find our selves to be, and though, by Gods grace, we be not in the frozen condition of mortal sin ; yet are we not perchance in the dangerous tepid state of sloathful negligence, and carelesse practise of all such vertue, and piety, as our profession and present calling require at our hands ? and if we be guilty herein, let us amend in good time ; for such spiritual tepidity, and neglect of Gods gracious favors, is the sin which God himself hath condemned, when he said, *because thou art luke warm and neither*

Apo. 30. neither hot nor cold; I will begin to vomit thee out  
 16. of my mouth.

These horrid and fearful effects of sin, may justlie move our hearts to true sorrow, and greatlie to detest them: which hearty repentance is as necessary to the Sacrament of penance, as is the soul to a living bodie: nor can we without it, convert our selves perfectly to God; for as by wicked complacence and delight, sin took possession of our heart: so it must be expelled by a holy detestation, and grief for all those offences, which our examen of Conscience laies open to our view; and moves thereby our will to that necessary hatred of their deformity; and firmly to propose amendment: which being so absolutely required for a good confession, we see well thereby, how necessary also it is to make a due examen of our Conscience before we confesse; And not to think it sufficient, to say only some accustomed preparatory Prayers, or Beads, and the like; who lie neglecting to examen by what sins we have offended God, since our last confession: and consequently not knowing our sins; how should we be sorry for them, and detest with purpose to amend, what our selves do not know? or how can our *Confessarius* absolve us, unless he first shall understand our sin? And such as put all to the Priest for examining them, do shew thereby so little care of their conscience, and lesse repentance for their sin (whereof they are wholly ignorant) as their confession can hardly be presumed good: no more than likewise theirs who usually make still the self same very form of

of confession, as they find it set down in their Book; still repeating the same, because they will not take pains to examine their Conscience, nor to dispose themselves to that holy Sacrament as they ought: And as the holy Council of *Trent* requires, by distinctly confessing their mortal sins, at least; yea, *one by one* (saith the Counsel, *Sess. 14. c. 5.*) And all Catholick Divines do generally teach the same. Our examen of Conscience being made, we must endeavour to stir up perfect contrition, or at least supernatural attrition (as the Council of *Trent* doth call it) wherein we must be very exact and serious, it being the most important act of this holy Sacrament; and wherein the grace of it depends, by dis-engaging our hearts from the affection of sin, and moving us truly to detest it; because it being injurious to God, whom we loving above all things, we must resolve by his holy grace to offend so no more. This internal pious act, whereby to dis-engage our hearts from sin, is so exceeding necessary, as that without it, our confession would be a Sacrilege; and because it is not easie to withdraw our hearts from the affection of our accustomed sin, it will require both labour, and serious industry to procure this necessary disposition, before we can have absolution by this Sacrament; and for that it is a gift of God, above our force, and to be supernaturally infused; it must be humbly implored from that Divine bounty, which fails not to communicate the same to a contrite and humble heart, desirous to love and serve him as it ought. But for the  
better

better quiet of some timorous Soul, it is to be noted here; that this detestation of Sin, as also the said dis-engagement of our hearts from the affection thereof ( which is necessary for a true act of contrition ) requires not that we be exempt from all inclination to accustomed sin; for if our will abhor it so, as that it be not voluntary, that doth suffice.

O but true contrition (*say you*) is a gift of God, framed by the Holy Ghost, and consequently a supernatural act beyond my force, graciously to be given by God; and therefore but in vain for me to strive for it. I answer, that both contrition and true attrition also, are the meer gifts of God, and the effects of his heavenly grace, which as it is never communicated without our co-operation, and due preparation thereunto; so God denies it not to them, who prepare their souls to receive the same prostrate at the feet of his mercy, with hearty sorrow for their sin.

And, by this, now you see the main importance, and absolute necessity, of a diligent examen of Conscience, before we come to confession; and how requisite it is to make some good reflection upon the great enormity of our sin; which being a chief disposition to prepare us to receive that heavenly aid of grace, whereby our hearts will easily be changed, and converted also from all wickedness unto the love of God.

Finally, do you desire to make a holy and profitable examen of Conscience before your confession? make it each evening with careful dili-



diligence; and not by meer custom; or for fashion sake; but rather, as if you were that very night to make your last account with God; whereon eternity should depend; and such a reckoning as you would wish then to be made; so make you the like each evening before you go to bed: for by that holy practise, you will be alwayes both rightly prepared for confession; you will sleep in good peace; and death will have no power to take you unprepared for your accompt.

*In what manner the Penitent is to comport himself whilst the Priest gives him absolution.*

**H**itherto concerning our preparation to Confession, by a diligent examen of our sins; by detecting them; and firmly proposing amendment; by an Act of true contrition, or of perfect attrition at least; all which being first required as a necessary condition to be absolved in this Sacrament.

Take here a word or two more, how the penitent is to comport himself, whilst the Priest is actually about absolving him, to whom he must apply himself in all humility, to hearken diligently to what he shall say: not considering so much his person, as, that he is the Vicar, and Substitute of Jesus Christ in that place, to dispence the divine mysteries of his most holy Church, considering himself, as a true guilty,  
and



and criminal person there subject to the Tribunal of Gods Church for the guilt of his sins there accused: expecting in all humility the happy sentence of absolution, and most willingly also to receive his penance to be imposed for the same, and with prompt good willingness to perform it; and finally, with due respect, and reverence to receive the good advice of his Ghostly Father, with a firm purpose to observe his wholesome admonitions for embracing vertue, or flying vice, and the occasions thereof; whereat he giving all diligent attention he must convert his heart entirely unto God, who confirmeth in Heaven the sentence of pardon, which the Priest pronounceth in that place: and thereby also he distributes to us his grace; to which we must dispose ourselves the best we can by true compunction of heart: not imitating them, who, whilst the Priest pronounceth the words of absolution, they buse their minds in thinking so much whether they have confessed all their sins, as they give little ear to their Ghostly Fathers advice, to which notwithstanding they ought to be very attentive, and as absorbing their very souls in the true love of God, and detestation of sin: for it would be but preposterously out of time, to employ our thoughts upon a new examen, whereby to hinder our application to the good counsel for our amendment of what we have confessed: especially, a due, and diligent search being supposed to have been made, as it ought, before:

Others

Others, no less to be blamed, wholly neglect to endeavour acts of Contrition, or of perfect Attrition for their sins, until they have actually confessed them, which is a dangerous abuse: Confession, supposing sorrow for the sins they confess, without which, who presumes to take absolution, he commits a sacrilege; because he wants the disposition required to receive worthily that holy Sacrament.

It is most true; you well may expiate your venial sins by several other means; nor are you obliged absolutely to confess them: yet if you shall make them the whole matter of your confession, you will be then bound to endeavour to accompany them with supernatural attrition, at the least; and with a purpose to amend, though they be but light, venial sins: yea, frequent confession, under the mask of such superficial devotion; and with neglect of this due disposition, do often much more charge than purifie the Consciences of such vain appearing devotes.

You will say perchance that being but very lately confessed, you had but some little usual and venial sin to confess. I answer, that one only venial sin, being the whole matter of your confession; you are bound to stir up Contrition or perfect Attrition at the least for it; before that the Priest pronounce the words of absolution (that being a disposition necessary for the worthy receiving of that Sacrament, and an essential part of the same) as also to disengage your affection from that sin: for whilst the will remains affected to any sin, it can never be

be pardoned; and who confesseth without this preparation, though he came guilty but of venial sin, yet he may return charged with mortal, for want of due disposition; and for neglect of an essential part of the Sacrament, which is abused; by that his unworthy receiving it, which is a formal Sacrilege and no less than a mortal sin.

But the timorous, and too scrupulous Soul must well here observe, that there is great difference betwixt a venial sin, and of our affection thereunto: for none living are exempt from all venial sin; yet well may they be from the affection to it. Now to expel that affection to sin; we are principally to labour, when we have no other matter but venial sin: for confession ought no waies to nourish in our hearts any will of perseverance in the least offence which we confess. And the best mark to understand whether we retain any affection or will to persevere in any sin; will be to observe our unwillingnesse to avoid the occasion of our falling thereinto: for not to avoid the occasion, is a tacit willingnesse to return to the sin, in that we refuse the necessary expedient to prevent the same. And by this very Rule we may make a good conjecture of our own state, and condition concerning our affection, tie, and secret complacence to sin.

Our preparation thus made to confession as you have seen, and likewise how we are to behave our selves at the receiving the absolution from the Priest: it rests only that we add a word concerning satisfaction; the third part of

of Penance; and what we are to do immediately after confession.

Our Confession ended, & our happy peace now made thereby with God; we ought to raise our hearts to affections of fervent love, whereby to unite our selves to him; and by those acts of love to offer up our selves to his Divine Justice, in satisfaction of our former offences; and then presently, in that fervour; to accomplish our sacramental Penance, or some part of it, at least, with all humble submission to that dreadful Majesty, which we have so hainously offended; doing here, as ought a criminal man forgiven by his gracious Prince, who makes firm, and good purposes for his future fidelity: let us likewise sacrifice our lives and actions to his Divine honour, by more faithful service and amendment of our life; and crave humbly his grace for perseverance in all those our present good resolutions, and for a true conformity unto his holy will.

And you must here observe, that one of the principal fruits of our Sacramental satisfaction, is; that by the contrary Acts of vertue we ruin the habits of our most accustomed sin; which because they cannot be exercised by us, but with the painful labours of good and virtuous works; therefore the Council of Trent, and generally all the holy Fathers of the Church, do call the Sacrament of Penance a *laborious baptism*: for as in Baptism we are purified by water and the Holy Ghost: so in this our second Baptism of Penance, we are also cleansed from our sins by Confession, Contrition, and satis-

Self. 142.  
c. 2.

factory works; which doubtlesse, if the sinner doth but rightly conceive due horror for his offences, he cannot but confesse himself deserving of a painful Penance in just satisfaction for them, and be willing also to embrace what laborious punishment soever to appease Gods indignation, and to satisfie his Justice for so heinous a crime: yea, the least spark of Divine love, or true zeal of his Justice, must needs stir up a very earnest desire to take just revenge of himself for so outrageous an offence. And who altogether neglects the worthy fruits of Penance, whereby to expiate the same, gives great cause to suspect their impenitent hearts: for had they but a feeling of the true sorrow (which a good confession requireth) it would compel them, by a pious force, both to Repentance and Penance, for having so outrageously offended so gracious and so powerful a God.

I must not omit to answer that usual and frivolous argument, made commonly by them who, to excuse their meer negligence and idleness, will commonly say, they can find no matter in their Consciences to confess.

But this pretended cloak for their seldom confessing cannot cover their sinful sloath; for the just man be said to fall seven times a day, who can presume to want matter for confession once a week? *St. Francis* thought it a great sin to be distracted in his Prayers; and he confessed it speedilie that he might obtain pardon thereof: *St. Katherine of Sienna* confessed dailie, and wept with great repentance for the least venial sin, (if that can be called little which is



committed against so great a God) so did St. Charles Borromeus, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Teresa, and many more of those great Saints: and in any now have so little shame as to excuse, and palliate their indevotion, and seldom confessing, by saying, that they can find no matter whereof to accuse themselves? O let them call to mind how exact an accompt they must render to their sovereign and dreadful Judge of each idle word; as also, of every moment of ill-spent time, and they will easily find, both by thought, word, and deed, or by omission, to have daily just cause to acknowledge their grievous offences, and to crave humbly Gods gracious pardon for the same. Or let them but seriously examine and behold the present state of their Soul, in the Glasse which is set before them, for the examen of Conscience, which will represent to their memory: and doubtless they will clearly perceive sufficient foul stains to be purged by that holy lavature of Sacramental Confession; and therefore confesse daily (as St. Aug.) seeing that daily thou hast new matter to confess, in Psal. 99.

Thus having now sufficiently shewed what is required for a fit preparation to make a good confession, and thereby to be rightly disposed to receive the grace of that holy Sacrament of Penance: It only remains, that I very briefly, will also put you in mind of the great fruit, and many gracious benefits, which we receive worthily frequenting



*The Holy SACRAMENT of  
CONFESSIO N.*

**T**O the holie plant of Devotion are belong-  
ing, as two principal Branches; Confes-  
sion, and Communion: yea, they are as two  
veral Fountains of all Grace and Benediction.  
The first revives us from the death of sin; and  
the second nourishes, and preserves us in the  
blessed life of Grace. And as for the right  
and practise in frequenting these aforesaid Sa-  
craments; we are most solidly advised by  
Bishop of Geneva (that great Master of all true  
Spirituality) in the second part of his Intro-  
duction to a devout life, chap. 19. about Confes-  
sion, to which I remit you; and thereunto I  
only add, for further motives to make oftner  
thereof, some of the great advantages; and  
most holy fruits, to be gained by oftner  
rightly frequenting this wholsome Sacrament  
wherein by each Sacramental absolution we  
gain a new degree of grace, and encrease  
of vertue; Our Soul thereby is cleansed  
and freed from a part of the pain, which  
former sins had deserved: She also gains force  
to avoid future sin; to resist temptations, and  
practise vertue; yea, the oftner that we confess  
the better will be our Confessions; our memory  
being more able thereby to call to mind our  
offences. It is also great security, in case of sudden  
death; which by this holy practise, probably  
will never find us in mortal sin (our due prepa-  
ration

ation to a right vertuous confession supposed)  
 or to go onlie by custome, or for some hu-  
 mane respect, without the preparation and di-  
 position necessary thereunto, would be but  
 rather to encrease the evil habits of our former  
 sins, than to gain any grace thereby: and  
 therefore much better to abstain in so unfit a  
 disposition.

What hath hitherto been said in order to  
 make a good confession; is but the preparation  
 which St. Paul requires for a holy Communion,  
 when he so severely threatning all such as com-  
 municate unworthily; he there commandeth  
 that we first prove our selves: *and so let him eat* 1 Cor.  
*that Bread, and drink of the chalice, &c.* which 11. 28.  
 we must not presume to do without diligent  
 examen of his conscience, whether he be in a-  
 ny mortal sin; which must be confessed with  
 contrite sorrow, and true purpose of amend-  
 ment before he presume to approach to this  
 heavenly food: for so the Apostles Doctrine  
 here, with the continual Custome of the  
 Church, and the ancient Fathers example  
 both bind us to do; as a necessary dispo-  
 sition required to receive the grace of that  
 most blessed Sacrament.

*Of the Holy Communion.*

**S**ALES the holy Bishop of Geneva in his aforesaid Introduction chap. 20. gives us in few words such perfect instruction about frequenting this Divine Sacrament; as I shall only need here to advertise how the Council of *Florence*, and Divines do generally teach us that as this holy Sacrament is true food to our souls; so also (in proportion) it works therein the like effects; as do those of corporal food in our bodies: which are to nourish, to sustain and to preserve them from sicknesse and death; to give force to resist Enemies, and to perform such functions as are required, and the like which are the good effects of our corporal nourishment, supposed that we be in good health and our stomachs prepared to digest the same but if over-charged by indigestion, or being full of ill humors; the best food would then cause the greatest surfeits, and do us more harm.

It is the very same with this spiritual food which being received by ill prepared souls; what marvel if they receive more hurt than good by their Communion; they having used so little diligence to be prepared for it: approaching rather by custom, and for fashion sake unto that sacred banquet, or for some humane respect; or finally with affection to some particular sin; but not with a pure soul, nor humble heart; which rather is destitute of all true

fervour

servour and devotion, and abounds with worldly vanity. In a word, so cold, so sloathful, and so void of all interiour disposition, or preparation required; as it would be much better they should abstain, than to feed so unworthily upon that sacred food; which in them hath quite contrary effects, to what it worketh in a vertuous soul duly disposed by devout fervour, and fit preparation; which (as likewise in a person invited by some great Prince to a sumptuous Feast) consists principally in these four things. 1. (And wherein generally all persons are exact and very curious) that no filth or apparent foulness may appear, either upon their linen or apparel; nor on their hands, or face. 2. That they appear decently and well clad. 3. With a well prepared stomach and good appetite; whereby the meat is made both gustful and profitable to them. And fourthly, they must not sit down to a Feast with a heart charged with anger, gall, or envy: for that would hinder both the gust, content, and benefit which otherwise they might have received thereby. So in like manner, our soul must come pure, clear, and well washed from sin; and as a neat Vessel to receive the grace of this holy Sacrament, for our divine Saviour himself hath beatified the *clean of heart*.

2ly. It must come cloathed with the nuptial garment of grace, adorned with vertue and good resolutions; without which it will deserve from the same divine Author, that great confusion and reproach of the guest in the Gospel,

*Friend*

Mat. 5. 8.

*Mat. 22. Friend how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding Garment?*

3ly. Our Soul must approach to this Heavenly Banquet with hunger, and true desire to please God, and to love and serve him with fidelity the best we can: for *blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have*

*Mat. 5. 6. their fill.*

And fourthly we must depose all enmity, and ill will to our Neighbour (as Jesus Christ doth also expressly command) and embrace them in love and Charity with a sincere and unfeigned

*Mat. 5. heart. If thou offer thy gift at the Altar, and 24. there remembers that thy Brother hath ought against thee: leave there thy offering before the Altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy Brother, and then coming thou shalt offer thy gift.*

Briefly the disposition required to Communcate worthily and with profit, is to have purity of bodie, by fast, and purity of Conscience from sin, and from all affection thereunto; hoping and purposing by Gods grace to amend. We must also stir up in our Soul an act of firm Faith of Christs real true presence in that holy Eucharist: which is therefore called by the Church the *Sacrament of Faith*. We must approach with great humility; in whose presence all the Cœlestial Spirits tremble at his Sovereign Majesty. We must approach with ardent love of so merciful, so bountifal, and so loving a Lord, who in this blessed Sacrament doth give us himself entirely, his Divinity, his Humanity, his grace and infinite merits; and therefore O how justly ought we to give our selves wholly



wholy and entirely unto him? And although our devotion be not so fervent, as it ought; yet let us stir up, at least, a good desire to have it; for a faithfull good will may supply the want of our sensible Devotion; and God regarding our heart, he will accept thereof: for our *Lord hath heard the desire of the poor, his ear hath heard the preparation of their heart.* Finally as according to the appetite of a well disposed Stomack, the food doth nourish: and answerably to its capacity the Vessel is filled: so also is our Soul replenished with grace; and is spiritually nourished, according to the purity of our conscience; and diligent disposition which we bring unto this Divine and most holy Sacrament.

*Psal. 9.  
17.*

And to conclude; we having now communicated; we must recall interiorly all the powers, both of our body and Soul, unto the presence of that Divine Guest, and seeming with holy St. Teresa, as if beholding there with our corporal eyes Jesus Christ to enter into our poor Lodging; let us raise up our Faith endeavouring to leave and lay aside all exterior things and thoughts whatsoever, with all possible diligence: and so, as if entring in with him into the interior Cabinet of our Soul, there summoning both all our inward faculties, as also our outward senses, to attend upon their Divine and sovereign Lord, to do him homage; or at least, not to distract nor hinder our Soul from the quiet enjoyment of him, at whose sacred feet we must represent our selves, as there deploring with repentant Magdalen our  
many



many sins. And though doing this, we should find no other devotion at all; yet Faith it self will sufficiently perswade us, that we are very well and happy also, there to speak to our loving Lord and Redeemer, so present; to hearken to our proposing to him our necessities, for all the time, at least, whilst the consecrated species remain with us. And therefore lose no moment of that most precious time of his real and substantial presence with you, but spend it in all true fervour of ardent devotion, with so Divine, so loving, and so powerful a guest.

A daily Spiritual Communion with the Priest at Masse, is also a most holy and profitable practise, desiring thereby to unite our selves unto God by true perfect love and charity; and in him, to our Neighbour, as his holy precept commands.

Our actions thus regulated from our up-rising till we go to bed; to which having also ad-joined a brief method for our examen of Conscience, as the necessary preparation, as well for Confession, as for holy Communion: of which respectively I having briefly shewed what is most requisite to frequent them worthily, and with most profit: It seems to me but very fitting that in the next place I should treat of Prayer, which serves as food to fortifie the Soul, and to obtain daily more grace for our faithful perseverance in all the obligations of our Christian duty. And though this be a subject alreadie so often treated, and by so very learned and skilful persons, as it may justly seem to be in me a most  
need-

needleſſe labour : yet knowing well that what  
abounds with ſome, may wholly be wanting  
to many others, who ſtand moſt in need :  
I thence conceive that it might not be un-  
uſeful for our poor Catholicks, after ſo long a  
time of great dearth for their Spiritual food;  
either by Books or inſtruction : ſuch as are  
provided of both, will have no need of  
mine ; but the poor and deſtitute will make  
good uſe of it, and leave me ( the welwiſh-  
ing Author ) a good gainer ; I hope, by their  
vertuous prayers.

Showing how Excellent and Profitable  
and how Neceſſary it is, that every  
Chriſtian ſhould be acquainted with the  
ſeveral Parts of the Holy Scriptures.  
Part I.

I mean for the right ordering of a Chriſtian  
life; and the true ſervice of God and his  
neighbour. In which I ſhall endeavour to ſhew  
that the Holy Scriptures are the only  
Foundation of our Faith, and the only  
Rule of our Life. And that they are  
the only way to the Kingdom of Heaven.  
The

# The third R U L E

## *For the Exercise of PRAYER.*

*Shewing how Excellent, how Profitable,  
and how Necessary it is : and what con-  
ditions , and dispositions are required  
thereunto. With a set Form for daily  
Prayer.*

**P**Raye is so efficacious , and so principal a means for the right ordering of a vertuous life ; as by the true fervour, or remisnesse therein, best judgment may be made of the true state of a Christian Soul ; *he knowing best to live, who knoweth best to pray* (saith blessed St. Aug.) and most certain it is , that Prayer is a needful food, a defence, and the chief preserver of Spiritual life in a Christian Soul ; it is an useful Fountain, without which the holy Plants of Vertue could neither take life, nor growth in us, were they not very often watered with this  
cœlestial

celestial dew, by holy Prayer; which gives both force and vigour to resist the scorching heat of our sensual affections; as also the unruly passions of our corrupt and intemperate nature.

The excellency of Prayer is singularly well expressed by S. Aug. who calls it the Key of Paradise, which opens all the doors and coffers of Gods Divine Treasure, and leaveth nothing shut, or hidden, to which it makes not way, and free access: yea, and what yet far exceedeth all the rest; it gives entrance to the Cabinet of Gods Divine presence, and affords us admittance at all times, and in every place unto his heavenly Majesty; there leisurely to confer, and treat with him all our necessities, concerning either bodie or Soul. This is that golden Key of highest honour, and greatest privilege given us by the Eternal King of Heaven, whereby without controul we approach the Divine Throne of God; there to contemplate his greatnesse; to admire his beauty; to love his goodnesse; to tast his sweetness; to represent our own wants; to beg pardon for our sins; to crave his grace; and to obtain great gifts both temporal and Spiritual. By this happy Key is opened to us the whole Magazine of his Celestial Treasures: nor is there any thing which he refuseth to this powerful address of holy Prayer; *Whatsoever you ask by Prayer, believe that you shall receive it, and it shall be granted to you.* O how highly would such a happinesse be esteemed by the greatest Favourite of a meer Temporal Prince; and therefore it hath not been without great cause that Gods chiefest Saints have  
Serm. 2.  
Temp.  
226.  
Mar. 11.  
ever

ever made so high an esteem of holy Prayer : Which they have also done in respect of another great prerogative which it hath, in communicating to our Soul supernatural knowledge and wisdom, by a divine light immediately from God himself; which doth far surpass whatsoever humane force or industry is able to obtain : *approach ye to me, and be enlightened,* *Psal.* 33. saith the Kingly Prophet. And from this light it was that *St. Hier.* and *St. Tho. of Aquin.* confesse to have had their greatest help to understand the hardest and obscurest points both of the holy Scripture, and Divinity. And by what other means obtained *Saint Anthony* in the Desert, *St. Simon Stilites* in his stupendious, and long penitential life upon a pillar, *Blessed Gregory Lopes* in his great retirement both from all company and study of humane literature ? *S. Cuth. of Sienna* ? *St. Teresa*, and so many more holy persons ? from whence, I say did they draw such profound knowledge of all Divine Mysteries ; but from the heavenly help of holy prayer ? nor is it any marvel that those who are taught immediately by God himself, should by such a light see more clearly, and understand more profoundly, than they who derive their knowledge but from their meer humane industry ; which is (without comparison) much more imperfect than the light of a Candle, in regard of the bright shining Sun ; which being of a far higher nature, and force ; it serves not only to enlighten, but also to give growth and life to all whereupon it shines ; whereas the poor weak and glimmering Candle comes



comes far short of all such effects; and fitly represents to us the weak capacity of mans natural understanding, and knowledge: and therefore great reason had the Kingly Prophet to say, *Psal. 93.* that *blessed is the man whom thou shalt instruct O Lord.*

Moreover experience makes it manifest, that who is faithful and fervent in Prayer, is both chearful and contented in mind: and where devotion grows cold by neglect of Holy Prayer, there vain-glory, self-love, and many unruly passions soon begin to revive, which before, by Holy Prayer were in due order kept down, and under the fear of God: yea, all such as aspire to perfection do experience, that this vertue of Holy Prayer is as necessary to a spiritual life, as is the natural heat, for a corporal; for as all true digestion for our corporal nourishment is made by the heat of our stomack; so likewise by Prayer, all our actions become grateful to God, and very profitable for the spiritual nourishment, and true Life of our Soul.

Blessed *S. Austin* is as efficacious, and clear in declaring to us the necessity of Holy Prayer, as he hath been to manifest its effects: assuring us that Prayer is as necessary for the Soul, as is Air, or Food for the Body; without which, as it cannot live; so neither can the soul continue long in its spiritual Life of Grace, without the holy exercise of Prayer; which is to her as a Furnace is to Iron: for that mettle, although of it self it be both hard, stiff, black, and cold; yet being cast into the Furnace, it becomes hot, soft,



soft, bright and very pliable to what form the Workman shall please; though remaining but a short time out of the forge it returns to the former natural qualities, and becomes as stiff, black, and cold as before. It is just so with our Soul; which through its depraved nature, is both cold, and very unplyable to vertue, unlesse it be heated by the holy fire of Prayer; from which it cannot long be separated, but it loseth fervor, and returns to its former bad inclination, and sinful habits again.

This briefly concerning the necessity, and great fruit of Holy Prayer. But I must not omit to say something also of the force and singular efficacy of the same; and how powerful a means it is to obtain at Gods hands all our, both corporal, and spiritual necessities; as I shall endeavor to prove by several most manifest examples, as well out of the Old Testament, as of the New.

This first may well appear in that dangerous great encounter betwixt *Antalech*, and the Children of *Israel*; wherein, so long as *Moses* held up his hands to pray, the *Israelites* prevailed; but, if ( through wearinesse ) his arms failed to continue that holy posture, their Enemies then immediately did gain the advantage; so that in *Moses* praying, consisted their strength and Victory. And how often he at other times by fervent prayer withheld Gods hand, even ready to strike a deserved revenge upon those rebellious people; may be seen in the afore-named Chapter.

The like powerful effect had his holy prayer for

for those sinful people, Exod. 23. Where we see how in a manner he held Gods hands from churning forth his destroying wrath upon that rebellious Generation, for their adoring the Golden Calf: *Suffer me that my wrath may be poured forth against them; as if he had held him by force from destroying them.* And Psal. 105. 23. he said he would destroy them, if Moses his self, had not stood in the way before him, to turn aside his wrath, that he might not destroy them. Of the Prophet Jer. we find the same, Jer. 18. 16. *Thou therefore pray not for this People, &c. and resist me not.* Joshua by his Prayer stayed the course of the Sun thirty eight hours (according to the Chaldee paraphrase, and St. Justin Martyr) until he had accomplished a glorious Victory over his Enemies. Esa. by Prayer caused it to go back in favour of King Ezekias ten whole lines of the Dial, and the self same King by his fervent Prayer, retarded death it self, fifteen whole years, which was before upon the very point to have seized upon him.

Josh. 10.

Kings 3. 18.

And since the Law of Grace, many of Gods Saints by Prayer have raised the Dead. St. Gregory Thaumaturgus (so called, by reason of the great number of stupendious miracles which he wrought) dried up a great lake by his Prayer, to reconcile a mortal discord which it caused betwixt two contentious Brothers. He removed a great Mountain, to make place for the building of a Church. He fixing his walking Staff into the bank of a River, which by its frequent inundations used exceedingly to prejudice all the Territories about: that drier Staff presently

F

sprout-

sprouted forth; and grew up to a great tree,  
 and by his Prayers became the limited  
 bounds of that unruly River, which it never  
 afterwards exceeded. The City of *Niebis* be-  
 ing very straitly besieged by a mighty strong  
 and numerous Army of the King of *Persia*: the  
 holy Bishop of that place obtained of God by  
 his Prayer, that great swarms of little gnats  
 falling upon that powerful Army, flew up  
 into the Elephants trunks, and so tormented  
 them; as being enraged therewith, they over-  
 turned their Leaders, and so trampled, soiled and  
 disordered the whole Army, as that in great  
 haste and disorder the King was forced to raise  
 his siege with much losse and confusion.

*Zonaras* relates, that *St. Basil* by his Prayers  
 opened the fast shut doors of the Church at  
*Nice* (which the *Arians* could not effect by  
 theirs) in the presence of *Valence* the Emperor,  
 who had proposed that expedient, to prove,  
 whether the Prayers of the Catholics, or those  
 of the Heretick *Arians*, were most efficacious:  
 and consequently which of their Faiths should  
 be esteemed for true.

In fine, the happy effects of holy Prayer are  
 so great, and so very many, as a whole Treas-  
 ure were much more fitting, than is a few Pa-  
 ragraphs to make mention of them: for Prayer  
 doth extirpate vice, and it planteth vertue. It  
 banisheth sloth, and nourisheth devotion. It  
 mortifies unruly affections, and moderates our  
 passions. It strengthens our souls in piety. It  
 illuminates our understanding. It inflames our  
 will, and it renders man wholly Divine.

Prayer

Prayer teacheth us in ignorance. It lighteneth us in darknesse. It raiseth those who fall. It re-  
 stitutes the erring. It strengthneth the weak. It  
 refresheth the weary.

Prayer is a heavenly Banquet; A Paradise of  
 the Soul; and our most happy Union with  
 God. By Prayer *Judith* vanquished *Holopernes*. *Judith* 13.  
*Hester* destroyed *Aman*. *Daniel* was preserved *Hest.* 19.  
 from the devouring Lions. The three Children *Dan.* 6.  
 in the fiery Furnace. *Ann* obtained fecundity. *4 Reg.* 20.  
 The Publican pardon. *Tabi* and *Sarah* were *Luke* 18.  
 preserved from the Devil *Acadens*. *Cornelius*  
 by his Prayers, obtained to be instructed in the *Act.* 10.  
 way of salvation by *S. Peter*. O powerful and  
 miraculous Prayer; thou art the rod of *Mo-*  
*ses* whereby all great wonders are wrought,  
 Thou art the Sword of *Gideon*, which vanquish-  
 eth all our Enemies. Thou art the beautiful *Hester*  
 so beloved of our Divine *Assuerus*, as thou  
 obtainest of him all thou desirest. *Paralt.* 11.

By all which prodigious miracles, and pow-  
 erful effects, we may sufficiently now behold  
 the great force of holy Prayer; and how strong-  
 ly it prevails with God for whatsoever we shall  
 but rightly demand thereby. It now remains  
 that I proceed; and shew

*What exterior preparation is required for Prayer : and what interior conditions are necessary to make it grateful to God, and fruitful to our souls : wherein consists the chief point of this Rule, for holy Prayer.*

**F**irst for the exterior preparation ; a convenient place is to be designed for Prayer, which may be solitary, quiet, and free from noise and company.

Secondly, certain appointed and convenient times are to be set apart for this holy Exercise, which (without fitting cause) we must not omit nor change.

Thirdly, the composition of body, must be modest, devout, and humble, as upon our knees, with joined hands, and elevated hearts, like Criminals, craving the mercy of God, by inward fervent affection of heart ; abstaining from all outward forced expressions, by wringing of faces, lowd sighs, or groans, whispering, and lowd pronouncing: as likewise from all extravagant external postures, which cause but great distraction to the devotion of all others, and are altogether unnecessary to make their own more pleasing to God ; who regards the interior affection of our soul, and not those forced exterior actions of the body, which are for the satisfaction of their own particular humour, and no waies necessary for the honour



honour of God; which they rather much hinder, by the great distractions they cause to others, whom they move but either to laughter, or to some impatience, by such actions, which are either greatly importune, or ridiculous to all that behold them.

Fourthly, our words must be also reverently pronounced, and so leasurely, as to be distinctly understood; for as it would be esteemed an exceeding incivility, to speak so confusedly fast to a temporal Prince, as that we could not be understood: so much more sinful irreverence it is to speak with the King of Heaven in huddling out our words so fast in Prayer, as that, even we our selves should not know that which we so mutter to Almighty God.

Now concerning the interior conditions required for this holy Exercise, (true Faith being first supposed, without which the Apostle tells us, that *it is impossible to please God*) the next Heb. 11. necessary condition (and required also by *St. Paul*) is Charity, without which even Faith it self (he saith) would nothing avail us: for 1 Cor. 13. both the Prayers and Sacrifices of wicked *Cain* were utterly rejected, because he made his offering with a heart full of rancor and envy against *Abel*, his innocent Brother. And therefore if going to make our Prayer and oblation unto God, we find any grudge, or breach of Charity towards our Neighbour; our Saviour himself expressly commands us to lay down our Mat. 5. Offering; and having first made our peace, and reconcilment; then to bring our oblation and not before.



It is here also to be observed, that there be certain sins which particularly do hinder God from harkning to us, or granting our requests; As is cruelty and oppression of the poor: and  
 Isa. 1. 16. *when you shall multiply Prayer, I will not hear; for your hands are full of Blood.* 2ly. Not to forgive  
 Mat. 6. 15 *our Enemies: If you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offences.* 3ly. Hard-heartedness towards the poor when  
 Prov. 21. *they begg alms of us. He that stopeth his ear at*  
 13. *the cry of the poor; himself also shall cry, and shall not be heard: so that our Consciencences must be free from those ungrateful sins to God, or else our Prayers will not be pleasing to him.*

The second interior condition is, by purity of intention to seek the true end of Prayer; without which it would be vain and fruitlesse: now the true and pure end of all good Prayer, is humbly thereby to crave a light from God to understand his holy will, and grace to perform the same: as also increase in his love, and advancement in vertue; a true conformity to his blessed will; with a reall contempt and abnegation of our selves; not seeking our own sensible gult, by spiritual consolation, but renouncing all curiosity of Spirit, and self love, to seek only, and purely Gods glory, and not our own satisfaction by Prayer: for in that we seek not God, so much as our selves, and our own interest; and therefore no marvel if we do not find him.

We must not therefore be troubled at our driness, barrenness, and insensibility in our Prayer; no, for we ought to love God without  
 interest,

interest, and truly serve him without asking reward: and who suffers patiently to be deprived of the comfort of spiritual consolation, and of all sensible devotion, submitting himself entirely therein to Gods blessed pleasure, his prayer will be most grateful, and very meritorious with God. We must not therefore strive for the sublimest prayer, but much rather for that which is most profitable; for that prayer undoubtedly is best which renders us most humble, and truly mortified; and not that which gives most gust and content, or is most sublime and high.

A third interior condition required for holy prayer, is the vertue of mortification; for such is the great connexion of these two vertues, as the one is never to be found in any eminent degree or perfection without the other. The reason thereof is very clear; for if the heart be possessed with vain or sensual delights, it is not capable of true spiritual and heavenly contentment. And therefore it is, that we find so few endued with this holy vertue of prayer; because there are so few who are truly mortified, or that will clear their surfeited affection from sinful sensuality: who, were they but endued with this holy vertue of mortification, they would easily obtain this other of prayer; the first disposing us unto the second: for since we cannot live in this world without affection to some content, or other, therefore it is, that if we hate and deprive our selves of these worldly contents, we shall easily seek out Divine and heavenly comforts, by the means of holy prayer; which doth necessarily require,                      Atten-

Attention, the fourth interior condition, and without which our prayer would be but plain hypocrisie; and by voluntary distraction, it would become vice, and much rather provoke Gods anger against us, than appease his wrath: for God being a Spirit, in spirit we must adore him (saith S. John c. 4.) and therefore only lip-prayer, without the heart (according to S. Isadore) is no prayer at all; prayer being (saith S. Aug.) a pious affection of the mind, directed to God; or as S. John defines it, an elevation of the heart to God. Without which, they are most justly reproached by the Holy Ghost, who

*Lib. de Spir. et a-relig. to God; or as S. John defines it, an elevation of the heart to God. Without which, they are*

*Mat. 15. 8. praise me with their lips, but have their hearts far from me:* Prayer being, without attention, but as the shell without fruits; which as it would be but justly offensive to present to a mortal Prince; so with much more reason, a far greater crime it is to present our Prayer unto God without attention; which would be but as the shell without the kernel, or as the body without a Soul; yea meer verbal prayer, without attention of the mind, is but a corporal action, and no prayer at all; which requires a pious affection, an attention, and elevation of the Soul: all which may be had by them who pray, although they do not understand the words of their prayer; for it is not the understanding, but the affection which God principally regards in prayer; as one may present to the King his petition in a language which the Suppliant doth not understand, for that doth not hinder the King from granting his desires, he seeing the mans good affection, and the justice

justice of his cause, which he well understands in that petition; the effect whereof the man who represents it also knows, though not the words; which is sufficient: for God loves to be adored in spirit, and by prayer, rather cordial, than verbal; and therefore to pray well and effectually, it must be with attention in the presence of God; with reverence and much affection; for it is that principally which God doth expect of us; and which we may well perform, although we do not understand the words, which God well understandeth; and that is sufficient: though generally the ignorant sort are to be advised, much rather to pray in their known and vulgar tongue.

Prayer finally is properly called a Virtue of Religion, and consists not only in the corporal or material faculty of the body; but chiefly in the powers of the Soul, and in the Spiritual actions thereof; which must be interior, and truly Spiritual: for otherwise it could be no true worship of God; and by consequence, no act of the virtue of Religion, it not proceeding from the interior operation of the Soul, by which God must be worshipped, as *S. John* hath told us, c. 4.

It is also to be here observed, that Prayer is not the end, but rather the means unto perfection: and therefore, that our prayer may be profitable, we must raise up thereby some pious affections; and produce from thence good purposes and resolutions for the actual exercise of some determinate virtue, or for avoiding some particular vice; for some certain good  
act

act to the glory of God, or to amend some certain imperfection; or finally to practise some vertuous act of mortification for the love of God, and the like: for in this consists the true profit of prayer, & by so praying, it will prove both holy and good; be it never so insipid, and drie: yea, it will be both pleasing to God and meritorious to our Souls, though wholly past over with what involuntary, and troublesome distractions soever.

Col. 3. The fifth condition (and the principal) whereby to make our Prayer efficacious to obtain what we ask, (and by which both it, and all our other actions ought to be regulated) is to present it in the name of Jesus Christ, as St. Paul recommends to us: *whatsoever ye do (saith he) either by word, or by deed: do it all in the name of Jesus Christ;* and God assures us that we shall obtain it undoubtedly; provided we demand it in the name of his dear Son Jesus, that is, in his spirit, and with such dispositions and intentions in our prayer, as he gave us example in this world to do.

And therefore to this end, unite your prayers to his, perform them in true love and charity, with humility, purity, fervour, and attention the best you can; and in all those other dispositions, and holy intentions, wherewith our loving Redeemer was accustomed to pray unto his heavenly Father, whilest he was here amongst us upon the earth.

The sixth condition, is to place our selves in Gods Divine presence with profound humility, and a contrite heart for all our sins; acknowledging



ledging our own great unworthinesse to appear  
in his sight, or to have audience of him; we  
not being able to have the least good thought;  
nor to perform (of our selves) any grateful  
act to God: but relying wholly upon the sacred  
merits of Jesus Christ; in which humble assu-  
rance we may demand of his Eternal Father a  
supply of all our necessities, both spiritual and  
temporal; together with all other Cœlestial  
graces for his sake.

The seventh condition required for true and  
fruitful prayer; is an humble confidence, with  
constant perseverance, and true fidelity in this  
Divine Exercise; for God doth require it in  
every many things which he will not grant us  
but by constant perseverance to demand them  
by prayer; thereby the more to exercise our  
humility, as also to make his gracious gifts to  
be esteemed the more.

In fine, the qualities and due properties ac-  
companied true holy and fruitful prayer, are  
these: Respect, Attention, Fervency, Faith,  
Hope, Charity, Resignation and constant per-  
severance in the greatest barrenness and steri-  
lity of all Devotion: yea, though we be as it  
were overwhelmed with great distractions, and  
dissipations of mind; wherein perchance the  
vertuous soul may be greatly afflicted through  
fear of offending; whereas by her patient suf-  
fering, and holy conformity, she becomes  
more grateful to God, than by the most fervent  
prayer, bedewed with many tears of sensible and  
very tender devotion: for in this our nature  
receives both solace, and great reward; but by  
holy



holy patience and fidelity, serving God in that insipid driness, and want of all sensible joy or consolation, she serves him for pure love, and much more generously; it being without all present recompence. For whose greater comfort and further direction, I conceive it but very requisite to add this ensuing advertisement.

*Concerning comfort in involuntary Distractions in Prayer, and the remedy against them.*

**F**OR the comfort of such as are afflicted with importunate, and involuntary distractions in Prayer; S. Basil assures us that God is only offended by such, as be voluntary, and with sufficient advertisement, and consent; staying wittingly, negligently, or on set purpose in such distractions in our Prayer; which is indeed sinful irreverence, and disrespect to Gods Divine Presence; to which they pretended to approach by Prayer. And therefore (according to S. Chrysostom) unto such we may justly say: *how canst thou expect that God should hear, or hearken to thee, seeing that thou dost not attend unto thy self?* but if using our best endeavour to resist such evil distractions, they nevertheless return; and that through our meer natural infirmity, we remain much distracted, and void of all actual attention in our Prayer; God is not offended thereby, but moved much rather

rather to compassion; he well knowing our infirmities, and the great frailty of humane nature. For as a loving Father compassioneth the natural maladies of his Children; much more tender is our Heavenly Father to all such as love and serve him, *because he hath known our making,* *Psalm 102.* saith holy David, and therefore will not be angry in seeing us fall into those our meer natural miseries and imperfections against our will; which we striving to resist, they are but as a combat to cause us much merit; and to make our prayer so much the more grateful, by how much we suffered therein with patience, those troublesome distractions, whereby Almighty God made trial of our fidelity: for we make a most excellent Prayer, when we offer to God the amorous affections of our love, with actual sufferance, for his sake, those things which much displease us: yea, then it best appears that we truly love him for his own sake, and not for his comforts, and spiritual gusts which he often communicates at other times; and the happy Soul which in this sort shall rise humbly from her Prayers (yea, though wholly possessed with such involuntary distractions) she may rejoice, and be greatly comforted, for having made to God so grateful a prayer, and more profitable also, peradventure than it would have been without the least distraction; God being greatly delighted with an humble and resigned will, which submits with a cheerful conformity to his Divine disposal in all. And though you find sometimes great driness, barrenness, and dereliction in your prayer,

prayer, yes, seem, as if wholly to be abandon'd of God; yet conform your self therein but willingly to his Divine pleasure, by an entire resignation; and you will undoubtedly make to him a most acceptable prayer, be it never so barren and drie: yes, though wholly past over in importune and involuntary distractions against your will; yet if it but render you more humble, more patient, more charitable and chaste, &c. you will have made a very profitable, and a most excellent prayer.

By this the timorous soul may well be comforted in all her importune, and involuntary distractions in prayer: though I must not omit to give you one good remedy more, by a fervent ejaculation, composed in this manner, out of the very words of that great spiritual Master, blessed *Avila*, which the troubled soul, as prostrate at the feet of Jesus Christ, may thus rehearse. *My dear and sovereign Lord; so far is this my great sterility, and distracted mind proceeds from any fault and negligence of mine, I am heartily sorry for giving the occasion thereof: but if it hath been thy Divine pleasure so permit them for due punishment of my sin; I most willingly receive them as a favourable chastisement from thy most holy hand: only grant me the grace, sweet Jesus, I beseech thee, that I no more offend thee thereby; nor be deprived of the holy fruit of my prayer.*

Say this from a sincere and loving heart; and doubt not but by your patience, humility, and resignation, persevering the best you can in holy prayer; you shall receive both profit and

and consolation: nor will you lose your reward which he hath promised to all them who use diligence and their best endeavour to deserve it.

Dart up your heart unto God, and say to him in mild and humble confidence: *Jesu the Son of David, have mercy on me. Knock your breast, and in the repentant Spirit of the humble Publican say; God be merciful to me a most wretched sinner, that I am, and do therefore most justly experience, that my soul is like to a dry & barren soil before thee, without one drop of the water of devotion wherewith to refresh it. And finally in union of that great dereliction which our dear Redeemer suffered upon the Cross, cry also out with him for heavenly succour: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.*

Mark 10.

Psa. 142.

Mat. 27.

And if after all this you find no remedy, nor any encrease of fervour in your soul; be then no further troubled, but faithfully continue your accustomed prayer the best you can, with a quiet and peaceable mind, in all true humility; accounting it sufficient happiness for you to be admitted to the presence of the highest Majesty; there freely to propose your chief necessities, and to be both heard and looked upon by him, although he then speak not to you with such familiar conversation as you desire; that being a favour not granted to all; but to such, and at those times as is best pleasing to himself.

Finally these distractions in Prayer be never so importunate, and this spiritual desolation never so anxious; yea, although we should conceive

conceive that probably they proceeded from our own sinful negligence and infidelity; yet we must not disquiet our heart for them; but rather with true humble patience, we ought to receive them as a due punishment of our former sin: for by so doing, we may be certainly assured, in the great mercy of God, that he will turn all to our greater good: if we but faithfully observe these three things following.

First, that we take occasion thence to humble ourselves the more.

Secondly, That no trouble, nor dejection caused thereby, drive us from the practise of our Prayer, nor from our accustomed and approved vertuous exercises.

And thirdly, That we employ our faithful diligence to avoid such faults, as may probably contribute to those distractions, and dissipation of our mind.

But you will say, how can my prayers be grateful to God, I having my heart and Soul encumbered with so many ill thoughts, and perverse inclinations? I answer, that it is one thing to feel the temptation; and another to consent thereunto: for if suffering such perturbations, and dis-ordered motions stirred up in the inferior part against your will; if you but reject them, and resist the best you can, so soon as reason but deliberately perceives them to be unlawful; your fear will then be needless; who have so good cause, with the great Apostle to say: *not that which I will, the same do I: but which I hate, that I do.* for without consent; those involuntary distractions are so far from being



being sin, as *S. Aug.* sticks not to assure us, that we need not say to God: *forgive us our trespasses for the same*, all sin being voluntary, and so be not the said distractions; to which give no consent, and you will be so free from any offence thereby; as contrariwise they serve you as a good occasion to encrease your merit in the sight of God: they also confirm you much more in true vertue, and will finally be sure of a most happy reward, by encrease of some needful grace, though not alwaies according to our own desire; the unfittingnesse whereof is oftentimes the cause of our not obtaining the same; as it happened to *S. Peter*, when enshroued with that glory of Christs transfiguration, he desired that he might so remain with him in that manner for ever: but God sheweth his love, as much in denying our prayers, when they are hurtful, as in granting them when they are profitable. God frequently grants not what we ask of him (saith *S. Aug.*) to the end that he may give us what we should have craved, had we been truly wise. He often refuseth our will, that he may grant us what imports our salvation, saith *Isidor.* The Devil begs permission to afflict holy *Job*; and his petition is granted: the Apostle prayed to be freed from his temptation, and he was refused: God yielded to his request who was design'd to damnation; and denyed his, who was decreed to salvation; for the sick person desires many things of the Physitian, and is refused: because he hearkens to him, not according to his will; that he may hearken to his health, thus *S. Augustine.* And therefore we ought to be as well content, and thankful to



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God for the one, as for the other; and never to repine at the not obtaining what we ask in our prayers; for if we have not our desire, we have that which is better for us, if we conform our wills unto the will of God. And whosoever well observes Gods manifest and blessed providence in denying him some things which he hath begged by *Prayer*, will undoubtedly perceive; yea, and be forced also to confesse in his heart, that Gods condescendence to his petition would have been much to his harm; because of his goodnesse not giving way to our ignorance, for our hurt; he grants not that which we then did imagine to be for our good; but that which he certainly knows to be best for us.

This obstacle to the effect of *Prayer*, as all several others mentioned, may best be prevented by purifying our intention in the beginning of *Prayer*; and by well examining our usual comportment in that holy exercise: what time we allow for it; and with what fervour, reverence, and attention we perform the same. Alas the least time which we spend in it, seemeth tedious, and very long; whereas we think it best but short, which is consumed in worldly and trifling vanities: which being well considered, we ought not to marvel at our grosse stupidity, and little gust in what concerns our spiritual and heavenly felicity, we being so very negligent to crave Gods needful grace for that effect; and which he only grants to such as do humbly and fervently beg it at his hands.

By these premisses we may sufficiently understand the nature of holy Prayer; as also the requisites, the necessity, and the force thereof: what preparation, and necessary conditions are required to make it efficacious to obtain what we ask: what we must do when assaulted with involuntary and importunate distractions; and finally what are the obstacles which make our Prayer inefficacious for obtaining what we desire; wherein although I have been longer than the brevity of a meep practical Rule might require: yet for that the right knowledge of a thing which is very precious, doth stir up a great desire to obtain the same; therefore I hope my labour will neither be lost, nor yet prove unprofitable; in laying open thus amply both the nature, and happy fruit of holy Prayer; whereby a vertuous soul will be moved to be much more serious, and assiduous in the devout practise thereof.

It now only remains, that I recommend to you some set form; and order for your usual and daily Prayers; which nevertheless you may change, and add to them according to your own devotion, and advice of your Ghostly Father; with whom right vertuous prudence doth require that you should freely communicate all your set practises of piety; for thereby you will the better understand Gods Divine pleasure, and keep your zeal and devotion much more securely within the bounds of holy discretion, renouncing your own satisfaction, in humble submission unto him, whom you have cho-

senſpiritually, to aſſiſt and direct you; and by him to underſtand the will of God.

*A Method, or ſet Form for our principal Devotions and daily Prayers.*

**C** Concerning this order, or ſet Form for your daily Prayer, it might be ſufficient to referre you to the *Manual*, and other good Books of Devotion; out of which your own diſcretion is beſt able to make a choice (as I doubt not but you have already done) moſt ſutable to your preſent condition: for the which your obligation in particular is very great to God, if he hath afforded you ſo gracious a favour of good leiſure, and opportunity to converſe familiarly with him, both by reading and Prayer, whereof they are deprived, who are of a meaner condition; and therefore as well in due gratitude, as alſo the better to correſpond with his happy calling; you may make uſe of theſe, or of ſome other devotions, as God ſhall beſt inſpire you; or as ſome well experienced ſpiritual Director may adviſe you by his better counſel.

After your firſt morning oblation to God, and rectifying of your intention for all your actions of the day, I muſt in the next place commend to you, one little half hour of mental Prayer (ſuppoſing your condition may admit it.) And as for the method to be practiſed therein, I remit you to that bleſſed *Sales* of moſt happy



happy memory, in his first and second part of his introduction to a devout life, where you shall see a short, plain, and easie method for making of mental Prayer.

Your Meditation ended, hear Mass, if you can, in honour and adoration of the passion of Iesus Christ, who is there truly present in that holy Sacrifice; and whereby the price of our redemption is applyed in expiation of our sin, which far surpasseth, in payment of that debt, all other satisfaction; whether by fasting, Prayer, or any corporal austericy whatsoever; it being the infinite satisfaction of our dear Redeemer Iesus, which is thereby applyed to our Souls. And hence it is that Satan our mortal Enemy, and all his wicked instruments, so mainly oppose the holy Mass, as greatly envying Gods glory, and our Souls health which is reaped hereby. Say daily our Ladies Office, and your beads, according to the severall Mysteries thereof, and read towards the evening the Saints life for the next day; observing with good leave what vertues you shall find therein most necessary for your own practise; and make it the subject of your next morning resolution, to produce some good acts thereof, as occasion may be offered; and craye humbly that Saints intercession to God to obtain you grace for imprinting needful a vertue in your soul.

There is yet one thing more, which both for its duty and profit, may challenge a prime place amongst our devotions; the Letanies (I mean) that most sweet, and adorable name of Iesus, which you have in the Key of Paradise, and



John 14.  
Act. 10.  
Act. 4. 12

other Books: Piety demands it, in devout acknowledgment of those divine and glorious attributes of our Eternal King, and loving Redeemer Jesus Christ. And profit may also persuade us to it; since Divine truth assures us that *whatsoever we shall ask in his name, it will be granted us.* Yea to him all the Prophets give testimony, that all receive remission of sins, by his name, who believe in him. Nor is there under Heaven any other name to men, wherein we must be saved. So dear and grateful was this blessed name to the beloved Apostle S. John, as it is to be found 200 times repeated in his Gospel.

And so sweet was it to S. Paul, as it is observed by S. John Chrysost. to be repeated by him above 200 times also in his Epistles; yea, and that after his head was struck off at Rome, his profession of the holy Faith of Jesus; It pronounced three several times that blessed name as if springing at each time with joy; and each bound a clear Fountain sprung also forth which are to be seen at this day, in memory of that his most blessed Martyrdom.

This sacred name was also found engraven with golden Letters in the heart of that holy Bishop and Martyr S. Ignatius, in testimony of his fervent love, and continual thoughts thereupon; which had so happily there imprinted it: and therefore not without much cause the great Apostle hath charged us; that whatsoever we do, in word, or in work, we do all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ: giving thanks to God the Father by him; whom we both praise and glorify by all the blessed attributes of those devout

devout Letanies; raising our hearts both to love and adore him: in whose sacred merits we must place our whole trust and confidence; as well for remission of sin, as for the salvation of our souls in eternal bliss.

Now as for the other Letanies of the sacred Virgin Mother of God, as also for that of the particular Saints of our Kingdom, you have them in your *Manuel*, and other Books of devotion, where you may find them. And for the first, I need not recommend it unto you: for if King *Solomon* entertained his Mother with so great expression of all yielding willingness to her petition, saying; *My Mother ask, for it becometh me that I turn my face*: how powerful then may we well believe, is the intercession of the most glorious and immaculate Virgin Mother of God and Queen of Heaven with her dear Son *Jesus*, in behalf of her devoted servants? Kin. 2. 26

The other Letanies of the peculiar Saints of *England*, we may confidently believe will also be very efficacious; seeing we cannot doubt, but that the Country which gave them their birth to that happy temporal life, wherein they wrought to themselves an eternal, is so peculiarly very dear unto them; as they cease not to beg that blessing for it (most to be desired) of a happy conversion to the only true saving, and holy Catholick Faith: for which we must join our most earnest petition with them for the encrease of Gods glory, and for the salvation of those so dearly redeemed Souls.

These three different Letanies may be ordered by your self for several daies, according to your devotion; by placing them in order amongst your other daily Prayers.

Be not unmindful of gratitude, and due devotion to your most faithful Angel Guardian: craye his assistance in all your necessities; and thankfully acknowledge his continual help and favour. Manifest with all confidence your necessities unto him, that he presenting them to God in your behalf, may obtain divine favours for your wants; good counsel in doubts; needful succour in your dangers; comfort in all your afflictions; protection against all your Ghostly Enemies; and particularly his best assistance in the dreadful hour of your death.

*The Practise of a daily particular Examen of Conscience.*

There remains yet that I also recommend that most profitable Exercise for the obtaining true Christian perfection; by making daily your particular Examen of Conscience, much after the method of your general Examen before bed: with this only difference; that this is to be made of all your sins in general, and the other, but in particular, and concerning your performance of the good purpose you made in the morning; either for rooting out some determinate vice; or for the practise of some particular vertue.

This

This special Examen of our fidelity concerning the performance of our mornings resolution, and subject of this our particular Examen, is ordinarily to be made immediately before dinner, and supper; and in the space of saying five *Pater nosters* (at the most) taking for the subject thereof (and as a particular task) either the gaining some needful vertue, or the extirpation of some determinate vice, most predominant in our souls, and of most scandal to our Neighbour; purposing to make that day some particular acts of that vertue; or of opposing that vice, as occasion shall be offered; and when we offend, to make some interiour aspiration to God; knocking our breast, or making the sign of the Cross upon our heart, in token of craving pardon, and that we dis-avow the sin. All which may be done, even whilst we are in company with other people (if conveniently we cannot retire) yea, although otherwise actually, and by necessity employed; yet we may retire our selves into the best interior Oratory of our soul; and there elevating our mind unto God, we may perform this holy Exercise, both with much merit and profit: as did holy *S. Katherine of Sienna*, whilst her Parents by corporal employments endeavoured to hinder her private retreat unto spiritual Prayer.

Our Examen thus briefly made of our fidelity, or negligence in that our mornings good resolution, we must give thanks to God for the one; and beg pardon for the other, as our own Conscience shall best dictate to us; craving  
Gods

Gods grace to strengthen us in the future occasions of temptations against that our good purpose; and to prevent all assaults which may most endanger us to offend.

If upon this our Examen, we find that we have fallen much more than ordinarily, into that imperfection which we purposed chiefly to amend: we must not therefore be disquieted, nor too much troubled in mind for it; but much rather let us impose upon our selves some voluntary Penance, of Prayer, Alms, or some good work, thereby to obtain Gods grace to amend our sin of sloath, of choler, of pride, of detraction, or the like; to which we find our selves inclined, and most subject to fall.

Lastly we must with true sorrow crave pardon for our negligence committed in that good practise; and purpose by the help of Gods heavenly grace to amend. And by a faithful continuance of this daily particular Examen, the faithful Soul will be greatly strengthened in all solid vertue, and may humbly confide to obtain a most happy and speedy Victory over all dangerous vice, which will not be able possibly to resist the great force of so holy an Exercise; the vertuous Soul co-operating with divine grace (from which all supernatural vertue must needs proceed) and not presuming upon any humane art or industry: it being great impiety to think it in our own power to produce a divine act of true sorrow, and firm purpose to amend our sin; which are the pure gifts of God, by the grace of Jesus Christ; which frames



frames those holy motions in our hearts, as  
meerly depending on the divine mercy and  
pleasure of God,

Take the advice of your spiritual Director,  
concerning the vertue, or vice whereof you  
make choice for the subject of this vertuous  
practise; as also for the time to be continued  
upon some particular vertue, or vice: which is  
usually to be, till you have gained the one, or  
quite mastered the other. That done; then  
take a new subject for your particular Examen,  
as before. By which holy practise, and Gods  
Divine grace, you may speedily arrive at the  
perfection of a true vertuous life.

Our morning devotion being ended; we must  
then apply our selves to that which our present  
occasions, and condition requireth at our  
hands: calling frequently to mind, for what  
end it was that God both created, and still  
preserves us in this life; for it being only for  
his glory, and our own salvation, we must di-  
rect all our actions of that day accordingly; as  
being accomptable for every moment of this  
most precious time which God hath lent us for  
that end. Proposing also there unto our selves  
some good employment for that present day,  
and not to consume it in idlness; nor permit  
our hearts to be so fixed upon meer worldly em-  
ployments, as to forget the divine service of  
God, or the true purity of intention, wherewith  
if we shall but season our actions, it will pro-  
cure us a most happy blessing, both for our  
temporal successe, as also an undoubted recom-  
pence in Heaven, due to such vertuous acts, as  
direct



direct our conversation in the fear of God, and our actions to be conformable unto his holy will.

Thus much concerning the several practises of this holy plant of *Prayer*. Its fruit will yet much more make manifest the goodness of the Tree, which is the means, and as the happy Conduit whereby Almighty God supplies our chief necessities, and replenisheth our Souls by it with those gracious gifts; which though determined by his divine order from all Eternity, yet he communicates them to us (saith *S. Thomas*) in time, by the means of holy *Prayer*.

Hitherto I have treated of *Prayer* in general, and according to its practise substantially only, and in gross, as the first and principal part thereof. To which it will not be unprofitable to add this ensuing second part, which much advanceth vertue in our souls, by holy and fervent ejaculations, and are as ardent flames mounting up to their Centre, Gods heavenly Throne, with amorous affections of his Divine love; whereby our souls become sweetly united to him, and makes happily good use of all occasions offered, to love, to blesse, to admire, and to adore both his greatnesse and goodnesse, in beholding his creatures upon several occasions offered in the day. And also by pious practises, as these Examples following will make it appear.

*Ejacu-*

*Ejaculations and pious thoughts to be  
exercised in several occasions  
of the Day.*

THE malice of our Ghostly Enemy is so great to prevent us of the happy end of our beatitude, as he sets his traps in all occasions to draw us into sin: and therefore to be the better able to avoid the danger of his strong temptations, and our own great frailty in the most obvious occasions which occur; it will be very needful to gain by much practise the good habits of pious ejaculations from our heart unto God, which like to enflamed darts of divinely amorous words, either spoke, or thought by a devout and ardent affection; may pierce the Heavens, in what company, place, or employment soever we be; whether in field, or cabinet, we may thereby retire to the private Oratory of our heart, and there closely unite our selves with God. And because there is no moment of the day wherein we stand not in need of his divine help; so we ought by this frequent means to dart up our hearts with true fervour; sometimes to praise his goodnesse, then to admire his greatnesse, or to demand humble pardon for our sins, or grace to subdue our temptations, and to lead a more vertuous life: saying with a fervent zeal in occasion of some vain glory, *O Majesty most sublime, who wast so lowly humbled for my sake, vouchsafe me true humility*

mility of heart, and rightly to know my self, a  
 meer sack of corruption, sin, and misery. O when  
 shall I die perfectly to my self, that I may live tru-  
 ly to thee. Grant me, O Lord, that I may conquer  
 Mar. 11. my own vicious humour, and learn perfectly of thee  
 29. who art mild, and truly humble in heart.

*At the beginning of any principal  
 Action.*

**A**T the beginning of any principal action, di-  
 rect & briefly your intention, and heart unto  
 God, saying within your self: It is for thy love  
 and honour, my dear Lord, that I do this; be it to  
 thy greater glory, and grant me grace that I of-  
 fend thee not thereby.

*When taking Holy Water at the Church  
 door, or in any other place.*

**T**HIS ancient Custom doth advertise us of  
 cleansing our soul from sin when we enter  
 into the house of God, & at all other times; that  
 by stirring up sorrow for our offences, we may  
 present our selves before his heavenly Majesty  
 with more purity of heart, and thereby to re-  
 call to mind the grace of our baptism; where-  
 by we received our Christendome, and were  
 purged from all sin; remembring our obliga-  
 tion, which there by solemn promise we made  
 to renounce the Devil, and all his works; as  
 also the Pumps and vanities of the World,  
 thereby to obtain our eternal beatitude. In  
 taking

taking the holy water, you may say with King David, as the Church accustometh: *Thou shalt sprinkle me, O Lord, with Hyssop, and I shall be cleansed; thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow,* Ps. 50. 9.

This vertue of holy water proceeds from the blessing which God gives it by the Prayers and Benedictions of the Church, and disposition of the Receiver and Giver, which ought to be with reverence and devotion, to chase away evil spirits, and their bad suggestions and wicked charms and forceries.

### *Of Holy Bread:*

**T**He Custom and institution of holy Bread, began in the time of P. *Pius* about the year 158. the constitution whereof is related in a very ancient Council of *Nants*, where the Curate is commanded each Sunday to blesse the Bread which was presented by the People, to be distributed after Mass to all such as had not communicated. And as representing the Holy Communion it was used with much devotion and reverence, fasting, and with an elevated heart to God. And served as a symbol of union and charity amongst the Christians.

And it is to be noted that the Council of *Laodicea* under S. *Sylvester*, forbids any Bread to be holyed upon *Easter-day*, because all Christians were obliged that day to communicate.

It was anciently distributed by the hands of Priests and Deacons, and to be eaten in the Church,

Church, not at the Table as now amongst common meat, and was carried home for such as could not come to Church.

Finally if it be taken with reverence, and in the holy intention of the Church, it will produce several good effects both spiritual and corporal: for by the Prayers and blessing of the Church, and by the devout disposition of the Receiver, it may obtain remission of Venial sins, chase away wicked spirits, and cure also divers diseases; as Saint Hier. in the life of Saint Hilarion, reports that Saint to have cured many infirmities with Holy Bread, and Saint Bernard, l. 3. c. 5. reports also the same.

*When importunately interrupted at our Prayers, or in other good Actions.*

His devotion, or good action is never hindered who but faithfully regards Gods divine order and providence, which disposeth of all for our greatest good: and therefore as we ought patiently to suffer interiour distractions; so also we must endure the exteriour; we may not put our selves in the occasion of such distractions; but if they happen, we must then receive them, as ordained by God, with all quiet humility: and although it chanceth that they shall interrupt us, yet Gods order and divine disposition is not interrupted in us, but much rather is fulfilled thereby; if we be but faithful and patient. This is the richest and chiefest secret of a spiritual life, and the truest Paradise on Earth: for



it conserves our hearts in perfect peace; and though divers occasions may hinder our Prayer, or the practise of some charitable good work; yet we have alwaies the good opportunity given us to exercise the true vertue of Patience, and holy conformity thereby; which in that encounter will be much more pleasing to God, and more effectual for our perfection, then would be those our other good actions which we intended to do; because therein our own will is principally to be found; but in this the true will of God, by denying of our own; wherein all true, and solid Christian perfection doth consist. *O not my will, but thine be done in all.*

Luke  
22.42.

*When some good thought, or holy inspiration is presented to our mind.*

**W**hen some good thought, or holy inspirations comes to your mind by reading, or by any other means; bend yourself sweetly to God; acknowledge the same as coming from himself, give him humble thanks for it, and beseech him with an ardent aspiration, to afford you grace to make good use thereof. *O give me thy grace, dear Lord, to comply with thy will, and command me what thou wilt.* S. Aug.



*When we hear the Clock strike.*

At the striking of the Clock. During the time of the day; let the striking of the Clock put you in mind of that virtue, which in your morning prayer you resolved to practise that day; or of the vice which you intended chiefly to shun. Let it be a renewing of the purity of your intention; an awaking the memory of Gods Divine presence; and of his innumerable blessed benefits bestowed upon you: offer up our Lord Jesus with his infinite merits, unto the blessed Trinity, as the most propitious Sacrifice for our sin. Or finally, raise up your heart to God by this, or some such like aspiration: *Blessed be the hour wherein my Saviour Jesus became incarnate, was born, and dyed for my sake.* Or make then the sign of the Crosse upon your heart; offering to him thereby all your thoughts, words, and deeds; craving his grace that you may never offend him thereby. And that at the hour of death he have mercy upon you.

*When we hear the Ave-Mary Bell.*

This is a very antient and pious devotion, generally observed throughout the universal Church; to admonish us both morning, noon, and night to make an humble and grateful acknowledgment of thanksgiving to the blessed Trinity

Trinity for the three principal mysteries of our  
 Holy Faith; by saying those three Versicles  
 adjoined to the Angelical salutation; and the  
 prayer there added at the end. Which devoti-  
 on is ordinarily called the *Angelus Domini*, be-  
 cause with those words it begins. And it is to  
 be said in the morning in grateful acknow-  
 ledgement of that most glorious Mystery of the  
 Resurrection of our Divine Redeemer. At noon  
 honour and memory of his most sacred death  
 and Passion. And finally in the evening, in ho-  
 mage and adoration of his blessed incarnation  
 and birth. This devotion I re-commend the-  
 re earnestly unto you; because it being so  
 self same time so generally practised by  
 all Catholick Children throughout the uni-  
 versal world; you join yourself thereby to that  
 union of so many blessed good souls: and  
 living together with them your due oblation  
 of humble gratitude; it will be much more  
 acceptable to his Divine Son, your only and  
 glorious Redeemer. *Lord unite me perfectly  
 to thy blessed will: and by true love and charity  
 for thy sake, unto my neighbour, according to thy  
 command.*

*When we go out of doors.*

*When going out of doors, first purifying  
 your intention (as formerly) and keeping  
 the divine presence before your eyes, and  
 presenting your heart unto him, say: *Open my  
 eyes, O Lord, and direct me in thy path.**

my steps according to thy Word; to the end that  
 injustice may rule over me, make perfect my going  
 in thy path.

*Whilest you are walking in the Town.*

**W**HEN walking abroad in the Town; you  
 may profitably entertain your thoughts  
 (whilest passing up and down the streets) in  
 representing to your self how Jesus Christ was  
 ignominiously led along through the streets of  
 Hierusalem to Annas, and Cayphas; from Pilate  
 to Herod; and from him back to Pilate again.  
 Who having most sacrilegiously condemned the  
 innocent Lamb of God: he was as cruelly  
 dragged thence unto Mount Calvary, there to  
 suffer his most bitter death and Passion for our  
 Redemption. Let these sacred stations entertain  
 your thoughts in passing about the streets; and  
 crave that by the merits of that his bitter  
 Passion you may obtain remission of all your  
 sins.

*When beholding, or entring into  
 some Church.*

When beholding some Church: consider  
 how your soul is the true Temple of God; and  
 therefore is to be preserved most pure and  
 clean from all sin, as becometh the habitation  
 of the Holy Ghost. And entring into it  
 with the holy Psalmist: In the multitude of

mercy, I will enter into thy House: I will adore  
 towards thy Holy Temple in thy fear, Psal. 134.

*How to make vertuous and true  
 Christian visits.*

IN all fitting visits (as occasions shall require)  
 you must be very careful neither to lose true  
 unity of intention, nor the memory of Gods  
 diuine presence, who will exact a strict account  
 of all your actions, which are not employed for  
 his honour, and for your own soul, and your  
 Neighbour's good. If you ask me how you may  
 direct your intention, to make it become pure,  
 is it ought? I answer, that your intention both  
 in recreation, and in all other conversation may  
 be First to honour Jesus Christ conversing  
 here upon earth with all sorts of men: crave  
 his grace that each step you make, may be in  
 honour and homage of those many long and  
 wearisome walks, and visits which he vouch-  
 safed to make in this world for our salvation;  
 and that nothing may passe in your conversa-  
 tion contrary to his diuine pleasure; either by  
 thought, word, or deed. Beseech the sacred  
 Virgin Mother of God to mediate also the ob-  
 taining for you that spirit of true charity, hu-  
 mility, and deuotion; wherewith she made that  
 holy visit to her Cousin S. Elizabeth. Take that  
 her holy visit, as the model and best original  
 whereby to frame and regulate your spirit, and  
 intention in all the visits which you shall either  
 make, or receive. Charity did animate this  
 her holy visit, to congratulate with S. Elizabeth

that heavenly great blessing, in being made the happy Mother of so blessed a child: as also to make her partaker of that great plenitude of grace, whereby she became not onlie replenished with the Holy Ghost; but also obtained that the fruit then in her womb was sanctified and confirmed in grace. Examine now whether the motives of your visits proceed from divine inspiration, and for the exercise of vertue, or that of this blessed and most pure Virgins discourse, or rather in your most commendable visits, to the sick, to Prisoners, to Kindred, Friends and the like; are you not led thereunto, by curiosity, vanity, interest, self-love, or at most by a meer human civility? And whereas the subject of this blessed Virgins discourse, was wholly Gods praises, of magnifying his gracious gifts and blessings, of humbling & abasing her self to the lowest degree; and ascribing all honour, glory, and goodnesse to God alone; whereas our discourse, perchance, is usually quite blinde to the contrarie; full of vain glory, with ostentation in publishing our own actions; in sinful detraction; in scandalous levity; unnecessary news of the world; uncharitable talk of our Neighbour; blaming and censuring both Ministers and Actions of State, which we do not understand, and the like; whereupon examine well your own usual practise, and endeavour for the future to amend what is amiss. Omit not to recommend your self (at your going forth) to your faithful Angel Guardian for the same effect. And finallie, make good reflexions afore-hand upon what visits you are to make, with whom



whom, and what about. And prefix to your self some fitting stint of time for them, thereby to avoid both tediousness to others, as also not to lose your own precious time for much better employment. Secondly our intention must be by civil visits to entertain charity, society, and true friendship with our Neighbours, by testifying with a friendly conversation both our respect and love to them. And thirdly, that by honest and fitting relaxation of spirit, we may be better able afterwards to employ our forces, both of bodie and mind to Gods honour in the other affairs of our own vocation. Finallie, for fitting matter wherewith to entertain the several conditions of such persons as you shall visit, I remitt you to the last Paragraph in the fifth Rule, regulating our conversation: where you may find sufficiently several heads to serve both for a pious and grateful subject for your entertainment and discourse. *Lord fix the thought of Eternity in my heart, during all my time of conversation.*

*How to prevent vanity, in discourse of knowledge and learning.*

**I**N all occasions of discourse about knowledge and learning; let still your aim be to reduce all to that true science of Saints, recommended by divine wisdom to us; and consists in a supernatural light whereby the soul discovers in creatures that true design of their Creation, as the effects of Gods goodness, and the true marks

Sap. 10.



of his love, in affording us thereby both help  
 and needful instruments for our salvation. This  
 holy science doth so mainly import us, as wick-  
*Wisd. 13.* out it all other learning is both hurtful and  
 vain: for though we understand both the na-  
 ture, the property and effects of all creatures;  
 yet if we be ignorant both of their end and  
 use, not applying them to Gods honour, nor to  
 our own souls health (for which only end they  
 were made) this science of Saints being want-  
 ing, all other light of humane knowledge will  
*Luke 11.* be but meer darknesse and obscurity; as in the  
 condemned Angels, for all their greatest know-  
 ledge it most manifestly appears. This holy  
 Science of Saints is not gained by studie, but  
 by *Prayer*; and is easilie distinguished from all  
 other humane learning whatsoever, which is  
 acquired by natural industrie, and is subject to  
 puff us up with pride, as the Apostle assures us.  
*1 Cor. 8.* But contrariwise this divine science, as being in-  
 separable from charitie; it renders us humble,  
 and verie grateful to God. *O that I may know  
 thee, my God; and know my self; that knowledge  
 is abundantly sufficient?*

*Walking in the fields in the Winter  
 Season.*

**I**F walking in the Fields, or Garden in win-  
 ter time, you observe the trees now naked,  
 and void both of fruit and leaves; then with a  
 holic aspiration say: *O eternal God without all  
 change, replenish my naked and barren soul with the  
 precious*

precious fruits of holy virtues; let all Creatures adore thee, and for ever magnifie thy holy Name.

*Walking in the Fields, or Garden in the Spring.*

**I**F in the cheerful time of the Spring, you be walking in a pleasant Garden, or in delightful Fields; dart up some fervent ejaculation unto God, as followeth: Thy glorious Spring, O Lord, doth never change, nor doth thy fruitful fertility ever fade; let all adore and magnifie thee, O Eternal and unchangeable bliss. When, Lord, shall my barren Soul produce the sweet flowers of virtue, whereby it may be made a pleasing place for thy entertainment. Admire in the several grateful qualities of the flowers, the amiable and great perfection of the almighty Creator: O how faithful are all other Creatures to serve thee according to their nature, except only ungrateful man?

*When we behold Birds to flie, or Rivers to run along.*

**O**bserving Birds to flie, or Rivers to run streaming along: consider how likewise our life doth flie and glide away apace unto its end, yea with much more speed; and that each step you make, is but a new approach still nearer to your death. O important moment of this precious time, in which we gain or lose Eternity!

*Beholding*

*Beholding the beauty and comely order  
of the World.*

**I**f thou hast given such comelineffe, O Lord, and so great beauty to this world, which is but a stable for brui Beasts, and habitation for mortal men; how far doth thy Celestial Paradise exceed in all excellent beauty, and glorious magnificence, prepared for thy self and happie Friends. O thrice happy lot for them who are to praise thee there, in endless beatitudo!

*Beholding the beauty of Heaven, and  
the shining Stars.*

**B**eholding the Heaven, say with S. Ignatius, *Quam terra sordet, dum Caelum aspicio!* or with another, beholding the beautiful stars in a bright night, saying: all this beautiful Pavement shall be under their feet, who love and serve God as they ought!

*In beholding the Fire.*

**B**eholding the Fire, I say: O how terrible must needs be the Fire of Hell, whereof this being much less than a shadow to it; we find it notwithstanding so unsufferable unto our senses!

*Beholding*

*Beholding the brightness of the Sun, and  
beauty of the Element.*

**B**Eholding that resplendant beauty both of  
the Sun and Element, imagine what glory  
God hath provided in Heaven for his Elect;  
where each glorified Bodie is far exceeding the  
splendor of the Sun, O what may we well imagine  
will be the infinite beauty, and splendor of essential  
glory it self; and how glorious his own Pallace, in  
comparison of this our poor place of exile!

*Hearing Musick, or the Birds to sing.*

**I**F this little silly Bird gives thanks and prai-  
seth God with such sweet notes for nourish-  
ing it with some little grain. O how ungrate-  
ful is man for offending him so grievously, and  
with so great ingratitude, after so great and  
continual benefits! Or hearing harmonious Mu-  
sik, or Birds to sing, think what is that Cele-  
stial harmony of the Saints and Angels in the  
heavenly Song, with perpetual Hymns of divine  
praises, and Alleluiahs. Blessed are they that  
dwell in thy house O Lord: for ever and ever they  
shall praise thee. *Psalm. 83. 5.*

*Beholding*

*Beholding the variety of Gods  
Creatures.*

**C**Onsider how they were ordained for the good of man; from whence produce due gratitude for Gods great goodness to you; and confusion for your own ingratitude, in abusing them against his glory, and your own soules good; so contrary to that holy end, for which they were ordained. O and how often hath my most ungrateful Soul preferred the gift before the divine Giver himself; and wholly neglected the glorious end, to enjoy but the means which were to help me only to that end!

*In some hideous stormy tempest of fearful  
thunder and lightning.*

**I**Magine what will be the horror of that most terrible day of Doom; think often of it now in time, adore the eternal decree of God therein; beseech him to grant you both grace and leisure to prepare your self, and to be ready to appear before that his dreadful Judgment to Eternity; let still that fearful Trumpet of the Angel sound in your ear.

*S. Hier. Rise now ye dead and come unto Judgment.*

*Calling*

*Calling to mind the present time of  
the Day.*

**M**Ake thence some good reflexion upon the state of your age, whether it be yet but the morning of your youth; the noon time of your middle age; or the evening, and declining unto your end; and conceive thereby how little we ought to esteem this present short, and uncertain life; whereof, what is already past, is nothing; and what is to come, is but the same; and all that which we can be said properly to enjoy, is no more than a very moment whereon depends our eternal weal or wo. Think seriously *What reckoning am I able to make unto God for what is past? I resolve to be more careful for the time to come: O grant me thy grace to perform the same: and at all times to be ready for thy last call.*

*Beholding much vanity and curiosity in  
apparel, or dressing.*

**O** My Sovereign Lord, how great cost, labour and pain do these take to please mortals eyes; and how little take I to beautifie my soul by holy vertue to make it pleasing to the sight of God!

*How*



*How to prevent disquiet of mind for such crosses, and afflictions as are most likely to befall us.*

**R** Effect oftentimes upon these crosses, that by foreseeing the occasions most likely in probability to fall out, you may be the better provided to resist, and defend your self. Offer them with a cheerful heart to God, in Union of the sacred merits of Jesus Christ, whereby they may be made worthy to be accepted by him, in penance and expiation of your sin. But if for all this, you find your mind begin to be disquieted, let then reason convince you, that what is now without remedy, ought not by fruitless vexation to encrease your harm: whereas by a sweet and mild regard with the eyes of your soul towards God (adoring his blessed will, and subjecting your self with a cheerful conformity to his divine, and all disposing Providence) you would not only preserve a most sweet and happy repose of mind; but also by a grateful oblation, and sacrifice unto him of that little crosse, your gain would inestimably exceed all loss whatsoever could happen thereby: you saying with a resigned heart, *Lord grant me Grace, that I never yield consent to what may offend thee; and true submission, and conformity to thy blessed will.*

*How*

*How to moderate our grief conceived at  
the sudden news of the death of some  
dear friend.*

**M**ourning for the loss of Friends is not to be blamed, nature being allowed to show its sense and feeling, within the limits of prudence and reason, in so just a cause. Thus *Abraham* bewailed the death of *Sarah*, his beloved Wife. *Jacob* deplored *Joseph*, conceiving him as dead. The *Israelites* bewailed the death of *Moses* 30 days. This *Jesus Christ* himself approved by his own divine example, sighing and shedding tears for the death of *Lazarus*. By all which we may conclude, that moderate Mourning for the death of Friends is not reprov'd, it passing not due bounds, nor to the notorious prejudice of our life, or health, which God and nature obliges us to preserve: for the contrary would offend both God, and the souls of our departed Friends; who even in the pains of Purgatory are excreably comforted with Gods blessed will, and disposition; yea, even in those their present sufferings. It is therefore much more worthy of a man, to let reason prevail with him for the cure of that, which time would effect to his greater harm: it being also most certain; that as immoderate grief doth but hurt to the living, so it doth no good at all to the dead; it much hurts our selves, and is very troublesome to others. We must not lament (saith *S. Paul*) as the Gentiles do

do, who neither have assured hope as we, nor are comforted with the expectation of an endless Blisse; whereby he forbids not a moderate sorrow, but onlie excesse, which proceeds either from self-love, or from infidelity. And therefore we must take heed, (saith S. Cypr.) least we give occasion for Pagans to think that all is but fables which Christians believe of the other life; as in some sort they might have cause, by seeing us so excessively to deplore those, whom yet by death, we believe to have obtained everlasting felicity.

It would therefore much better beseem a true Christian practise, by that occasion of being separated from so dear and beloved a friend, to unite our hearts thereby more closely to God; and making to him an entire oblation thereof, to say with the holy Psalmist: *Thou hast broken my bonds (O Lord) I will now sacrifice to thee the Heast of praise.*

*When our Labours or Sufferings grow tedious, and seem over burdensome to us, causing welancholy and sadnes, and how to apply the true Remedy against this dangerous humour of Melancholy.*

**I**n these occasions, we must call to mind the laborious and wearisome pains which Jesus our true God and Man, did suffer to satisfie for our offences,

offences, and thereby to purchase to us salvation. For which, due gratitude exacts from us, with all cheerful conformity to his blessed will; that we embrace these laborious strons, as also what sufferings soever he shall please to impose upon us. Crave humbly by earnest prayer, that Gods divine love may be the sole possessor of your heart: for enjoying that, you will have both strength and courage for all the rest.

But if sadness and melancholy shall yet deject your heart; then with a generous courage you must raise it up to praise your so loving Creator; and in despite of that dull heaviness of mind, rejoice with cheerful gratitude; for that he hath made you capable of so noble and happy an end; and afforded you so many, and easie means whereby to obtain the same; for this will drive away that evil spirit of Melancholy with much confusion. Nor can it chuse but greatlie joy that heart and soul which shall but well consider its own capacity of so incomprehensible a Blisse. In fine, would you be freed from Melancholy? live then vertuously, for solid vertue and Melancholy can never lodge long in the same soul together: and when you find Melancholy most to assault you, then put your self most to employment, and force nature especially from all drowsie idlenesse; for Melancholy resteth, and groweth strong, there onlie, where sloath is harboured; and it's driven away by action, which yieldeth not leasure to Melancholy thoughts.

You will say perhaps, that for the danger of Melancholy, it is very well known, but you

cannot hinder what nature hath ingrafted in you. To this I answer again, that you must labour, and diligently bestir your self against it: for it is an evil which the more you amuse your self thereupon, the more it will gain an increase upon you. He that perceiveth his House to be on fire, and seeing the flame to break out on every side; and instead of resisting it, should stand but idly looking on, deploring the power of that unmerciless Element, he would soon see all consumed in flames, and himself highly condemned for not endeavouring to extinguish it. It is the very same with a melancholy person, who well perceives his harm; but through sloathful dulnesse, will neither use corporal industry, nor yet the spiritual remedies of devotion, whereby to hinder that melancholly evil; but rather by yielding to the natural dull, and pensive stupidity of that idle humour, he casteth more fuel to increase the flame: whereas undoubtedly it is a far greater pain to endure the vexation of a sloathful, dejected, and melancholy mind, than it would be to apply the true remedy (as above is specified) to cure that dangerous disease.

In fine, S. Francis had good reason to say to his Brethren, when he espied any of them to be sad: Brother (said he) who serves God must not be melancholy, unless he hath committed sin whereof, if his conscience accuse him, let him confess it, and then return to his former alacrity. O my great Sovereign God, who can be sad in heart, or melancholy in his mind, who truly serves thee and be ought? For, if rightly considered, what cause

can he have, who loveth and feareth God, to be sad and melancholy? which is an humour much fitter for Epicures, and meer sensual, and great vicious Livers, who well may carrie Hell about with them; whereof their evil Conscience doth make them guilty: but the Child of God, endeavouring to observe his Law; what cause hath he to be sad or melancholy? This great follie is best cured by neglecting it; and if mens companie do trouble you, recur to the better conversation, both of Gods Holy Saints and Angels. Or, if finally these worldly employments be tedious unto you; then mount up to Heaven with your thoughts, and there converse with those Cœlestial Citizens of Paradise: speak often with God himself by holie reading, and prayer: by which you shall most easilie avoid this hurtful and dangerous disease of Melancholy: adhere thou closely to him my soul; for that conversation hath no bitterness, nor is that company tedious, but full of gladnesse and joy. *Wisd. 9. 16.* Yea these very words. O my God, my Sovereign Lord, my Redemer, and my all, spoke and proceeding from a true devout heart, are powerful, so to unite it with him, as to expel all disquiet, and all melancholy sadnesse from the soul.



*Profitable Resolutions when surprised  
with some sudden Pain, or  
Infirmity.*

Luk 16.

**S**O soon as some sharp pain, or troublesome Indisposition shall seiz upon you, regard it as a loving correction from his divine and fatherly hand, who from Eternity hath ordained all for our greatest good. Submit your self to his all disposing providence, and adore his Heavenly will by a holy and true conformity. Imagine by that infirmity seizing upon you, to hear God for to call, and say to you, *render accompt of thy Stewardship*: for in time of health we scarce think to prepare for it; and therefore if death should but suddenlie surprize us; O in how doubtful a case should we be! sickness is therefore a great mercy of God, thereby to give us warning and leisure to prepare our selves for that important reckoning; and is but as Gods messenger to us, and as a *Jonas* to the *Ninivites*, to stir us up to repentance, whilst time and opportunity is granted.

Secondly, Call to mind the great and many sufferings of other people, and you will easilie conceive how very favourable God hath been to you. For which excite your self to gratitude, and to embrace his blessed will; accepting cheerfullie your present pain in part of satisfaction for your sin.

Thirdly

Thirdly, Remember this most comfortable promise of our divine Redeemer : that, *as you are partakers of his sufferings, so shall you be of his consolation.* Yea, it is necessary here first to be crucified with Jesus (saith happie Sales) before we can be glorified with Jesus. Take therefore with cheerful conformity this unsavory potion of your present pain ; which so accepted of, from the hand of God, and tempered with true repentance, and firm purpose of amendment, it will be an infallible cure of the sinful maladie in your soul. Consider therefore the great advantage which may be made of these your present pains ; and do not repine, for a little unsavoury tast, to receive with joy your cure from so loving and skilful a hand. O no, but rather, and with true Christian courage crie out with blessed S. Augustine to this our heavenly Physitian : *here cut, here burn, spare me not here (O Lord) to the end thou mayest spare me eternally.* 2 Cor. 1.

Finally, by each infirmity God warneth us to make readie for his comming (saith S. Greg.) and *he knocks thereby at our door, to put us in mind of our mortality:* Let us bid him (with Hely) heartily welcome ; *For it is our Lord let him freely dispose of us as he shall please.* Yield all to his divine pleasure, who knows best what is most for our happinesse : Raise your heart to embrace with joy Gods blessed will, who from Eternity hath disposed that sufferance for your good ; and rejoyce that in such a measure, time and manner, his divine disposition is accomplished in you ; for by these good reflexions

our infirmities will be both satisfactory, meritorious, and much more easie also to be suffered.

*Against rash resolutions in hard and doubtful affairs.*

**C**ounsel is that gift of the Holy Ghost, which by a supernatural light directs our understanding to discern good from evil; and in difficult affairs, what ought to be done. Our blessed Saviour, (that eternal wisdom) spent 30 whole years in a retired life at home; and 40 daies more in the desert, before he publicly began to manifest the great work of our salvation by his preaching and conversing with men; not for any need he had of so long and deliberate a preparation thereunto; but meerly for our example, and to teach us thereby to use more wary circumspection, who are by nature so inconsiderate, and subject to err by too much levity of spirit, and precipitations in the actions of our life; wherein (they being difficult, and of importance) we ought ever to consult with some wise and experienced person before we finallie resolve; and to crave humbly Gods grace for it; at least by a pious elevation of heart with holy King *David*, saying: *direct me* **Psal. 24:** *in thy truth (O Lord) and teach me.* Holy *Greg. Lopes* is a worthy example to be imitated herein; whose opinion being asked in any doubtful and difficult matter; he deferred to answer till the next day, saying: *to morrow will come, and*

then we shall be wiser : giving thereby to understand, that an important businesse was not to be resolved suddenly, or without treating, and verie diligentlie recommending it to God ; who commands us to do nothing without counsel : for he directs mens actions and resolutions, when they use the means of consultation with such persons, by whose advice we may best understand his heavenlie will ; having promised, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he is there in the midst of them. There is much health, where is much counsel (saith the holy Proverb) I will conclude with the same Eccl. 32. Mar. 12. Prov. 11. which assures us, that Counsel shall secure thee, and Prudence shall preserve thee, that thou mayest be delivered from the evil way ; he means which doth lead us to endlesse Perdition. And what more perswasion now shall we need to embrace so happie and so necessary a practise, so mainly conducting both to our present, and eternal felicity.

*In a dangerous temptation, or occasion  
of Sin.*

**F**Inallie perceiving your self assaulted with a dangerous temptation, or in occasion of sin ; make the sign of the Crosse upon your heart, in token that you humble crave Gods help, and that you dis-avow the sin, say ; Lord I suffer weakness answer for me.

Those words are the substance of the prayer, and contain in  
I 4

*In occasion of impatience.*

**SAY:** O most patient Jesu, when shall I by thy Holy example rejoice in suffering injuries, and contempt for thy sake!

*In temptation to covetousness.*

**SAY:** O treasure Eternal, when shall I imitate thy holy poverty!

*In temptation to Revenge.*

**SAY:** O most mild Jesu, who so meekly forgivest all thy cruellest Enemies, when shall I by thy divine example forgive the small injuries which are done against me; and rendring good for evil, shall pray for my Persecutors.

*Finally to demand Charity, and other needful vertues, say with a fervent heart.*

**O** Grant me grace Lord Jesu to make me fervent in thy love: Patient in adversity: Constant in doing well: Devout in thy service: To detest all sin: And to be in all things conformable to thy blessed will, Amen.

These pious praetises are as the extracted quintessence of Holy Prayer; and contains in brief

brief, Ejaculations from the heart, what Prayer doth exercise more at large: Prayer is as the bodie of the Sun; these as the bright warm beams, inflaming our souls in the practise of all vertues, which taking thence both their growth and nourishment (as true fruit of that Divine Plant of Prayer) it is justlie requisite, that they should have the next place in

**The**



## The fourth

## R V L E

*For the exercise of certain select vertues, most conducing to the practise of holy Christian Perfection.*

**T**HE former Rule instructing us how to render due honour and homage to God by Prayer, and vertuous Exercises, as occasion should be offered in the day: it followeth for the more accomplishment of our Christian Duty, that the next should teach us how to pay him our like due tribute by the practise of true Vertue. For which end you have in this Rule the several Exercises of such choice vertues as may be conceived most needful for a vertuous Soul aspiring to perfection.

But before I speak of any in particular; it is to be supposed, that to make a right choice of the needfullest, and most profitable vertues for your

your practise; you must consider wherein it is that you find your chiefest frailty, and greatest weaknesse, on the one side; and secondly, what is your particular state, and profession, on the other. For by this, you will easilie perceive what vertue is most needful for your present condition; or by what vice you are chiefly in danger to fall into sin; to the end to oppose it: which having discovered, arm then your self strongly against that pernicious Enemy, and bend all your whole force and diligence to the practise of that holy vertue which most opposeth it. As for example, if you find that pride, vainglory, or self-love, and proper esteem, work strongly to get possession in your heart; oppose them vigorously by the diligent exercise of holy Humility, abjection and contempt of your self. If intemperance, and too much love to content the sensual appetite shall too immoderately tempt you, repell it by temperate sobriety, and by mortifying all superfluous curiosity in your diet. If choler, and angry passion shall surprise you; resist it by patience, and in the spirit of the mildnesse and meeknesse of Jesus Christ. If avarice begin to infect your soul and to harden your heart against the poor; or to bend your mind too earnestly upon encreasing wealth, and superfluous commodities of this world: oppose that covetous vice by some generous deeds of Charity; whereby you relieve your own soul, and nourish it most happily with heavenly grace. If rebellious sensuality of the flesh molest you; suppress it by fasting and Prayer, or by some corporal austerities, to keep

it in due subjection, both to reason, and to the Law of God. If finallie the dangerous vice of sloath, and indevotion shall begin to fasten upon your soul: call presentlie to God with much fervour in Prayer, that his holy Grace may soon re-enkindle in you the ardent flame of true piety and devotion: but above all, be you sure never to permit that no sterility whatsoever, no disgust through driness, or barrenness in your Prayer, shall so far prevail with you, as to omit your usual and accustomed devotions: for patience, and perseverance in your fidelity unto God, will not fail to obtain you a blessing to your full content and joy.

The like you must also observe in all the rest choosing ever to prefer such vertues as are most conformable to the obligation of your present condition, before such as are most agreeable to your own gust and inclination: for true devotion seeks not so much its own proper satisfaction, as the pure will of God; nor is it in the exercise of many actions of Piety that our perfection consists (saith that blessed Bishop of Geneva) but in the doing of those, to which our particular condition most obliges us; and which best suits with our present, and proper calling or office. For as it suits not with a Bishops calling, nor with a Curate of Souls, to be so continually retir'd in contemplation, like to a solitary Monk; whilst the souls committed to their charge want the assistance, which by their visits and careful solicitude, they are bound to afford them: so neither is it the fitting vertue to be exercised by a profest solitary life, to be too much busied abroad

broad in meer secular visits and conversation. Nor would that Mistress of her Familie be lamelesse, either before God or Man, who for her own satisfaction, spending most of the day at her Prayers, and other devotions in the Church, should leave all in disorder at home; her Servants in idleness, her Children in dissolution, and her Husband in exceeding great anger and discontent, at that shameful neglect, both of her duty and charge; which undoubtedly God much rather requires at her hands, than to spend all that time in the Church for her own private satisfaction, which ought not to be preferred before that duty, which both God and her calling requires most to lye at her hands.

*A necessary Advertisement for the true, solid, and profitable practise of any Vertue which we most desire to obtain.*

BEfore I proceed to the Exercise of these following select vertues in particular; I conceive it very requisite, here first to give you in general this necessary advertisement for the profitable exercise of any vertue whatsoever; and for the speedy obtaining of that vertue which we most desire: not doubting to assure you, that the ill observance of this Rule, is the cause that so many after long exercise, and innumerable acts of such vertues as they most desire to obtain, yet profit verie little therein.

Now

Now the true reason thereof is this, that each vertue having its proper spirit (which is the Essence nature, and as the very soul, or form which gives life, and truly perfects the action) we endeavour not as we ought to frame in our souls (for the right practise of that vertue) such due dispositions, as the spirit of that vertue requires; and without which precedent dispositions, the vertue is but meerly superficial, and only exterior.

Wherefore we ought first to know, and well consider with our selves, what is the spirit of such a vertue, or wherein consists the essence and true nature thereof; to the end, that we may practise each vertue in its own proper spirit, that is, to have a true interior feeling thereof; and that as we exteriorlie procure the action of the vertue; so also we may practise in the interior of our heart, the very vertue it self without which, the exterior act little or nothing avails: this interior disposition being to all vertuous actions, as is the soul to the body, and as the root from whence the tree receiveth life and nourishment: yea, it is as the very bottom of the Soul, the Origine and life of all Christian, and vertuous actions.

This great truth will yet appear more manifestlie; by considering with attention what small progresse in vertue is made by the only exterior practise thereof, if the right spirit, and interior disposition be wanting; as by this particular example, in the vertue of Humility, it may sufficientlie appear; and the same will serve as a Rule for all the rest. Observing that

to obtain true humility by practise; it is first necessary to understand in what that vertue consists, to the end that when we would produce the acts thereof, we may do them in the spirit of that vertue, and conformable to our knowledge thereof: for otherwise how should we be able rightlie to practise a vertue which we do not understand; or how can we profitablie produce the acts thereof with any feeling or understanding of that vertue which we exercise, not knowing wherein the spirit of that vertue doth consist.

And to make this now clear in our former example of Humility: we must first place our selves in the interior disposition of this holy vertue (and so likewise of all the rest, at which we aim) acknowledging the meanness, the misery, and meer nothing of our own proper force and nature; and thence embracing willingly our own self dis-esteem, abjection, and contempt we must love God above all things, from whom all good doth proceed, and to whom only all honour and glorie is due; and to our selves nothing but confusion and punishment. Now this is to lay a true ground, and right foundation in our soul; whereby in her exercise of the exterior act of humility, she stirs up in her heart a thought, and feeling of true humility; and awaking in her self the dispositions both convenient, and proper to that particular vertue; she accompanies the exterior act of it, with an interior esteem, and pure desire of true humility; and with a low and base esteem of her self. Now to perform an act of vertue in this



this manner, is to do it in the spirit, and in the true and right disposition of that virtue which we exercise; without which the exterior act would be but a meer moral, or natural virtue; but no Christian virtue nor divine; betwixt which notwithstanding great difference is to be made: the first being purely Humane, grounded upon vanity, self-love, or private interest, and are but Pagan, Philosophical, and meer natural virtues: whereas the other are divine, supernatural, and the proper virtues of Jesus Christ; and is that Robe, where-with the Apostle exhorts us to be cloathed; by truly imitating his divine Charity, Humility, Patience, Mildnesse, &c. *putting on the new man, which according to God is created in Justice and holinesse of truth*: For the virtue of a Christian consists not in the outward appearance, but in the heart and soul; not walking as the Gentiles (saith there the same Apostle) *walking in the vanity of their sense*; but aiming rather to please God than man; it being that heavenly Kings Daughter, whose glory and lustre is not outward, but within; animated with the spirit of Jesus Christ, which is that Fountain of all true virtue in man.

Ephel. 4.  
24.  
Psal. 44.  
14.

And therefore whosoever aspireth to true perfection, he must labour not only to produce the exterior acts of that particular virtue at which he aims; but also (and principally) he must endeavour to root out of his heart the opposite inclination, and evil habit thereunto. For to be truly humble, it sufficeth not to exercise the exterior acts of humility, if voluntary pride

pride remain at the bottom of our heart : and whosoever gives alms with a mind possessed with avarice, and an obdurate heart ; he catcheth at an empty shadow, and is deceived by a meer bodie without a Soul. Yea, many fallie conceive themselves to be greatlie advanced in vertue, by some new punctuality in the observance of exterior practises of piety proposed to themselves: who, notwithstanding after their long and punctual exercise therein, make small advancement in that holy perfection, at which they did aim : and the reason is very manifest, because they neglect the interior ; and seek not the spirit of that vertue, for which they so labour but in vain : and consequentlie they not practising it with the necessary conditions, which those vertues do require ; but rather with quite contrary ; many thousands of these exterior acts, will never be able to beget true vertue in their souls.

It is therefore most necessary to frame in our selves the disposition of that vertue which we exercise ; and before all things else, we must labour to form our interior, and rightly to direct it ; for who hath a defective bottom in his soul, or a vicious root and motive, he cannot produce good fruit from it : And therefore to exercise the exterior acts of vertue, without the interior disposition required, would be but to catch at the shadow of vertue, and to remain with a reality of the opposite vice.

Another reason, why many desiring, and endeavouring also to obtain some certain vertue, yet never arrive to the perfection thereof ;

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may

may be, for that they seek it not in the Fountain, nor the right way; but labour to obtain it by their own natural and proper industry; not looking upon it as Gods pure Grace, proceeding from his meer bounty, and goodness, and to be obtained by constant and humble Prayer, through the merits of Jesus Christ, whose greater glory must be the motive; and that we may become thereby more grateful to his Heavenly Majesty; by imitation of those blessed vertues which he did practise here upon earth for our Example. For this is the only true motive, for the right exercise of all Christian vertues: and not Philosophically to aim at them for our own satisfaction, by gaining esteem, or to become more pleasing to men, which is but a moral, and no Christian vertue, in that it is but humane, and natural, meerly fained and counterfeit; grounded only upon self-love, and pure vanity; whereas true Christian vertues are supernatural and divine. And in a word, they are the vertues of Jesus Christ, which he communicates to such as love and truly follow him.

Thus much by way of needful advertisement for the profitable practise, as well for these selected vertues following, as also for all others whatsoever, to be practised by the vertuous soul.

And to proceed herein with due order, I must in the first place propose that vertue, which is the proper instrument to advance all the rest, and doth render them much more easie to be practised: and this is the vertue

*Of Mortification.*

**A**FTER this general advertisement, so very necessary for the practise of Vertue; it will be now requisite to speak of the proper instrument required for the right exercise thereof. And this is the very same which you find above proposed for the condition required for *Holy Prayer*, to wit, that most necessary vertue of Mortification: without which (as it there appears) that no Prayer can be found in any eminent degree; so likewise (and for the self same reason) no eminent purchase can be made of any vertue, without the help of mortification; whereby renouncing our own proper will, and the natural corrupt propension unto flesh and blood, we take up our Cross and embrace those contradictions of sensuality; dispossessing our hearts of that unruly appetite for worldly contents; and by a courageous, and mortifying act, we subdue our vicious passions, which both blind the eyes of our reason, and do also much weaken the will. Which passions and disordinate affections being subdued, the understanding becomes truly enlightened to judge what is good; and the will remains freely dis-engaged to make choice thereof. By which it well appears how necessary the practise of this vertue is: Although a stronger motive for it is, in that it is so very pleasing unto God. For although that God delights not in our torments, precisely in that they are painful to us; yet he loveth,

and taketh great content in them, in regard that they are so necessary for us, and so advantageous also for his own glory; in that thereby much satisfaction is made unto his divince justice for our sins.

But this vertue of Mortification seems to many great pamperors of nature, so painful and very difficult, as they conceive it would too much prejudice their health; and thereupon they become both sloathful and cowardly, and like to bogling horses, they either start back, or will not go on. These persons would obtain Vertue without pain, or any hindrance to their ease: but our nature is not so fertil, as to produce such fruit of it self without any sufferings; nor is vertue of so low a price, as not to deserve to be bought with some labour and pain. In fine, who pampers his bodie, doth banish vertue from the soul, and disposeth it to rebellion and vice.

By which it now appears that Mortification is the very ground of Perfection; it disposeth the way unto vertue, and is as the very means and needful instrument required to put the same in execution. For as Reason by original sin rebelled against God; so likewise, in due punishment, the sensual appetite in us, rebelled ever since against Reason; and so mainly inclines our corrupt nature to evil, as unlesse it be strongly kept in by the curbing bridle of Mortification (and that rightly managed also by Gods *Holy Grace*) we shall most assuredly be thrown down by temptation into the destroying precipice of mortal sin: which to prevent

prevent, our surest remedy (as *S. Paul* admonisheth) will be by *alwaies bearing about in our bodie the mortification of Jesus*: for it is a vertue as necessary to preserve piety in our souls, as are the Garden sheers to keep the Borders forms, and figures in due order; which without often cutting, and clipping away of those superfluities which nature doth continually produce, no form, nor beauty would be left in the best planted knots in the Garden; nor no true ordered vertue in the soul, where Mortification is wanting. In fine, this vertue is as needful for the planting of true vertue in our soul, as the hammer to frame the fashon which the workman is to introduce into the iron, now already disposed by the Furnace, and made pliable thereunto: for be your mind never so well disposed by *Prayer*; yea though inflamed by divine inspirations, by spiritual lecture, by good counsel, or by any other means whatsoever to the holy practise of Patience, or of Humility, Prayer, Abstinence, or to the exercise of any other vertue; we shall find undoubtedly that Mortification is the needful instrument and means to put in execution those good resolutions, against which our corrupted nature will spurn, and make much reluctance: and unlesse our good purposes be hammered out by the strong blows of Mortification, all our former good resolutions will soon become as cold, stiff, and unplyable, as is the very Iron it self, when long detained from the forge; nor shall we have any application at all to our former good purposes; which not being then laboured out

<sup>2</sup> Cor. 4.  
10.



by the hammer of Mortification, they served for nothing but rather to obdurate our hearts; as is the Iron by being often softened in the forge, but not wrought by the hammer to the workmans design.

In fine, experience makes it manifest, that neither vertuous habits can be long continued, nor good purposes will be put in execution, nor yet any great progresse made in the true practise of Piety, without this holy instrument and needful means of Mortification. And therefore much reason had an holy man to say, that Prayer without Mortification, is but a pure illusion; yea, pray as much as you will (saith he) but you will not become by it more perfect, unlesse you be also mortified; and he concludes that though Prayer be very powerful, yet that a mortified man, exceedeth a man of Prayer.

This now supposed for all vertues in general, in the next place is to follow the vertue

### *Of Humility.*

**T**Hese premisses now serving for the more solid, and profitable exercise of true Christian vertues; I will here, out of many, propose some special and select amongst all the rest, and which may be justly conceived most requisite for the practise of a vertuous soul aspiring to holy perfection: Wherein to make the more solid building, we ought first to lay the foundation. Whence to raise the work of true vertue

in our souls, we must begin with Humility, the  
 right and solid foundation of all other vertues;  
 yea, and the very root which gives life and lu-  
 cre both to the Flower and Fruit of all other  
 Vertues whatsoever: and without which no  
 & of the greatest vertue can be either grateful  
 to God, or available to our souls: *Yea, accor-*  
*ding to S. Gregory, to practise other Vertues with-*  
*out Humility, is but to cast dust in the air;* Humi-  
 lity being the conserver of all other vertues, Eccel. 10.  
 as Pride is the ground of all sin. It prepares Jam. 4.  
 the Soul to receive Gods divine grace, *who re-*  
*specting the proud, he gives grace to the humble.* It Mat. 11.  
 makes us also capable of Gods secret mysteries;  
 which being hid from the worldly wise, they  
 are revealed to the low and humble of heart.  
 It doth purchase true peace to our souls; ex-  
 cluding anger, quarrels and discontent; all  
 which proceeds originally from self esteem, and  
 Pride.

These and many more being the happy fruits  
 of holy Humility; I thought it but very neces-  
 sary here in the first place to propose this need-  
 ful exercise of that vertue; thereby the better  
 to prevent and arm our selves against the dan-  
 gerous blast of vain glory and Pride, which de-  
 stroies, and may deprive us of the precious  
 fruits of our best and holiest exercises. Against  
 which most dangerous soul-poysoning vice;  
 and which blasts the fairest vertue in its very  
 bud, humility is the proper antidote; and  
 therefore no vertue is more seriously recom-  
 mended to us by our blessed Saviour himself  
 (both by his practise and doctrine) than is this,

Matthew  
11. 14.

which he so expressely commands us to learn of him, who is *mild, and humble of heart*. By which words our Saviour gives us to understand that there are two sorts of Humility: one of the understanding, or spirit; the other of the heart or will: both which are very necessary for a soul aspiring to the perfection of this holy vertue. Humility of spirit is as the root and source of the other; and whereby we acknowledge our baseness, misery, and nothing in the sight of God; we thence conceive a mean, abject and contemptible opinion of ourselves: which though it be the first degree and as the foundation of all true humility, yet unless it be accompanied with that other of the heart, it will little avail us. For this humility of the understanding, and spirit, the Devils themselves cannot renounce it; because they well behold their abject misery, and little worth; but for the practising true Humility of the will and heart, they are far from it: which must consist in being glad to be so lowly humbled, and esteemed abject and contemptible; yea, willingly to suffer, and embrace contempt and ignominy; and to despise and flie the esteem, or praise of men.

Make now some good reflexion upon your own practise herein: for as concerning the humility of our understanding, or spirit; it is sufficient to have but common sense to force us to avow the little worth, and abjectness of man; and to what misery all humane kind is subject: but to conceive thus meanly of ourselves, and to take content in being meanly esteemed

esteemed by others; is that true Humility of heart which perfects this great Christian virtue. Our blessed Redeemer now could not have the humility of spirit, or understanding; for being God, he could not have any abject esteem of that his own sovereign worth & greatness; but as for humility of heart and will, he hath both taught and practised it in the highest degree; descending from his Throne of glory, to invest himself with our frail and mortal nature, and suffered therein all manner of poverty, ignominy, and contempt, yea, death it self for our redemption, with all circumstances surpassing the greatest torments, humiliation and confusion which ever had been given to mortal man: all which he freely and voluntarily did suffer, to satisfy the rigour of his eternal Fathers justice in our behalf; becoming *as a reproach unto men, and the very outcast of people.* In imitation of this our loving and merciful Lord, this great virtue of Humility doth teach us to rejoice in disgraceful contempt, and seeks to be despised by all. It flies worldly honour and dignity; and much distrusts our own weakness and frailty. It loves reprehension, and to be corrected by others, and to practise mean and humble employments. Finally, it persuades us that no villifying contempt can be answerable to what our sins have most justly deserved.

Esa. 53.  
Psal. 21.

These are both the effects and fruits of this great virtue of Humility of heart; which consists not in words, or little ceremonies, accompanied with outwardly modest, and seeming humble

humble tears, or in low and submissive bows: all which may well (and frequently) proceed from a meer outward, and false humility.

From these premisses it will not now be hard to examine what marks are required to know a true Christian humility; how standeth your self conceipt, and proper opinion of your own sufficiency and desert; and that also in respect of other persons? At what aims your discourse and conversation? How take you neglect from others, and their expressions of disesteem? How stand you affected for praise, or for reprehension, and blame? What account do you make of others? Do you sincerely prefer them in esteem before your self, according to S. Paul's advice? *Each counting other better than themselves in humility.*

Phil. 2.

By all which, although according to humane deceived sight, this vertue may seem but poor base, and very despicable; yet by God and his blessed Saints, it is highly esteemed; and may well be resembled to the Cyphers in numbring which though nothing of themselves, yet placed behind an unity they make ten; above a hundred behind two; above a thousand behind three; and so forward in proportion. In like manner humility in it self, though but little esteemed; yet it is that which gives the true value to all other vertues: yea, it is the very rule and measure of all true sanctity it self; for who is sincerely humble, is truly holy; and who is most humble, he is also most holy: for according as one humbles himself, so God doth exalt him, and puts down the proud: Humility

Matth.

13. 11.

ty and vanity, being like the two scales of a  
 allance; the one rising proportionably, as the  
 other goes down: if pride, self-esteem, and va-  
 nity prevail in our hearts, then the scale of  
 true sanctity will be but empty and void: but  
 if we be well ballanced with humility, and pro-  
 per contempt; then all pride and vanity will  
 prove light, and quite vanish away.

For this vertues sake it was, that God raised S.  
*Anthony*, S. *Benit*, S. *Francis* & others to be Foun-  
 ders of so many holy orders of religious per-  
 sons in the Church; who though most eminent  
 in all perfection and sanctity, yet their Humi-  
 lity was so great, as they durst never admit to  
 undertake that more than angelical high state  
 of Priestly function; which notwithstanding  
 now (to the great scandal of the Church) is by  
 such sinful presumption sought for, by so ma-  
 ny unfit, and most unnecessary persons. Those  
 other most holy, and so highly vertuous great  
 persons, possessed in a high degree that true  
 humility of heart, which consists not (saith  
 that great Master of all sweet devotion, *Sales*,  
 the holy Bishop of *Geneva*) in a complemental  
 trainging of words or gestures, of kissing the  
 ground, or lowly inclinations; they being done  
 (as it often doth arrive) without the inward  
 sense of our own abjection; for such are but  
 vain abusements of a weak, shallow brain; and  
 are rather to be tearmed, but extravagances of  
 humility, than the true vertue it self; which  
 makes us both supple to correction, and very  
 prompt and plyable to obey.

This



This true humility of heart consists not in the knowing only, and professing our own great unworthiness, and misery : but much rather in loving, seeking, and exercising of this our baseness and abjection ; and in desiring to be so esteemed by others, abject and contemptible ; yea, to be also content (as such) to be contemned, and despised by all. And that whatsoever we say of our selves to be willing that others should both think and say the same of us : for if we think so truly of our selves, men generally desire that all should be of their opinion ; and he is but an hypocrite, who accuseth himself before others, with an intention not to be believed ; and by a counterfeit outward humility, doth practise much inward pride. To this purpose I must not here omit what happened to that holy man, *Peregrin* ; the Founder of that religious order of the Nuns of *noſtre Dame de la miserecorde*, who confessing a person of quality, she accused her self (in general terms only) to be the greatest sinner living, and the wickedst creature in the world ; but would accuse her self of little in particular. Her virtuous and prudent Confessor, enlightened by God to perceive her interior ; and all that to be but counterfeit hypocrisie, and to be esteemed humble thereby ; Madam (said he to her) you accuse your self to me for so great a sinner, and for the most wicked woman alive ; but can you believe that I knew so much before, and was so certified of it by others. But hereat her counterfeit Humility was soon discovered, who in vehement choler answered him. How so,  
good

good Sir (said she) have you such news of me? what base villains are they who have so abused me, and wronged my reputation? Oh did I but know who they were, I would soon be revenged, and make them dearly repent. This discreet and vertuous Ghostly Father having patiently permitted her to discharge the great passion of her anger and complaint; he most wisely then did represent to her the vanity of her dissembled pride; and so discreetly disposed her to see her fault, as she became truly contrite, and made a penitent and very humble confession, with that true humility of heart which loves humiliation and reproach; as also what else soever that may truly vilifie and abase us.

A second practise of this holy vertue I also much recommend unto you; that you not only love humiliations and contempt; but also that you hate and flie the vanity of all splendor and worldly greatnesse; as also the desire of humane praise, and mens esteem. Be rather alwaies readie, and with a prepared mind to be humbled, as was our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in his life and birth; and finally, in his bitter death and passion upon the Crosse. Cast now the eies of your Soul upon these great Humiliations of Jesus Christ, true Son of God, and Sovereign Lord both of Heaven and Earth; and draw from that divine model the right coppie of your abjection, and true humility of heart.

O most wretched and ungrateful Creatures that we are; how can we so love vanity, considering how lowly that high God of all Majesty, and our dear Redeemer was humbled for our sake! crave humbly Gods grace to practise this holy humility of heart; in the disposition and spirit of that profound humility which Jesus Christ hath practised for our love; and that with a true vertuous courage you may cheerfullie endure all confusions and abjections whatsoever; they being all so most justly due to a rebellious sinner, and to most abject and detestable sin.

Finally, our nature and base extraction but well considered, is able to abate all pride in us, we being made but of earth, which for its Centre hath the lowest place and is trod upon by all. And into what doth he return, but to dust, which, though it may be blown up for a while by the wind, yet still its natural and resting-place is to be under all mens feet; *memento homo quia pulvis es, & in pulverem reverteris*. And though the puff of vain glorie may blow thee above many of thy fellows in honour, riches, beauty or strength, &c. yet thy end, as well as thy beginning, shall soon be as naked, as poor and equal in all unto theirs, death with his syth laying the King, Prelate, and Beggar, all flat along, and equallie alike, *quid ergo superbis pulvis & cinis*, for the meanest beggar will shortly trample boldly upon the greatest Monarch in the world, as he was trampled on by him with his authority, power and pride.

of Conformity to the Will of God, by renouncing our own. The third Exercise of this Rule.

THIS holy Conformity is to the precedent great vertue of humility but as a link of the self same chain, and the very true sequel of that blessed vertue; they being both united in that superior happie tie of the love of God, whereby this precious chain is composed of the continued links of many other great vertues, and unites us happilie unto God himself. In fine, from true humility (as from a most precious root) springs forth this fair and grateful flower of vertuous conformity: for by an humble and true abject contempt of our selves, our own will becomes easily conformable, not only to the will of God; but also, for his sake, we submit and subject our selves, even to the meanest Creature alive. For true Conformity to the will of God, is a perfect renouncing and mortifying of our own: *he who will follow me must renounce himself* (saith Jesus Christ) and obey to the will of God, although it be with much reluctance to their own: whereby notwithstanding (as S. Greg. doth assure us) they will find themselves discharged of the heaviest burden of all the rest, to humane nature; and from whence proceeds our greatest contradictions in this life, and discontent by failing of our own will: whereas were it put entirely conformable to the will of God, no grosse encounters

Luk. 9.  
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ters to our own desire would be capable to afflict us; we submitting our selves in all things most entirely to Gods eternal order and disposition, who doth all for the best: unite therefore but your will unto his, and you shall find all true happy repose; adhere to your own, and you will find resistance to your greatest desires, and much perplexity; whereas a soul but conformable to the will of God, finds consolation in all things, and no accident whatsoever will be able to trouble the happy peace of such a soul, whose faithful practise, and daily prayer against the strongest encounter with  
 Mar. 6. flesh and bloud, is this: *thy will be done*; The sovereign remedy against all tribulation, and the accomplishment of christian perfection consists in the faithful practise of those three words, *fiat voluntas tua*, in being cheerfully submitte to the will of God in all things, to will only what God will, and to be therewith content, is the greatest felicity in this world: and the greatest unhappineffe is to seek after our own proper will, which makes us ungrateful to all others, and even unsupportable to our selves. This holy conformity makes the heaviest cross but very light, it being supported by true love, and willing conformity; which S. Bern. not unfitly compares to the feathers of a flying bird, the weight whereof are so far from hindring her to flie, as contrariwise she would not be able to flie without them: so in like manner true conformity, though in it self may seem a burden; yet it bears him up with joy, and strengthens him, cheerfully to march with the heavieff

viest Crosse of tribulation, who charges but his heart with this supporting burden of true loving conformity to Gods holy will.

Now in the faithful practise of this heroique vertue consists that truest Christian perfection, & the right art of serving God; which Jesus Christ hath not only taught us by word to pray, that *His will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven*; but he confirmed also the same by his own blessed example, telling us; that he came down from Heaven John 6, Mar. 11. not to do his own will, but the will of his eternal Father who sent him: and the same he esteemed as his nourishing food: yea, and it is right worthy to be observed; that from the time of his return with the sacred Virgin and S. Joseph from his divine reasoning with the Doctors in the Temple of *Hierusalem* (as if he had descended from Heaven for no other design; than to shew obedience and conformity unto his heavenly Fathers will, in obeying and being subject unto his Parents pleasure) he was so exactly punctual in all dutiful obedience to them, as the holy Evangelist recompts to us no other of his Divine actions, during the far greater part of all his time living here upon Earth amongst us; but only this; that he was obedient, and subject to them: the perfect performance of which holy conformity unto his heavenly Father, he finally sealed, by rendring himself unto that bitter and reproachful death upon the Crosse: in imitation of which divine example, we must be in all occasions so resigned to Gods holy will, as is the Clay in the Potters hands; which chooseth not its own fashion, or

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form;



form, but is pliable and yielding to that which the workman pleaseth to ordain it unto. Say therefore with an unfeigned heart, as *S. Paul*: *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* and with *King David*, *Ps. 72.* as thy beast I am thine, and to refuse no burden to be laid on me: for what is more conformable and obedient to his Masters will, than is the poor beast, which without exception or repining doth grudge at no burthen whatsoever, be it of drugs or of Gold, be it of sand or of Pearls, or of Diamonds; be he put to it by night, or by day, to fair way, or to foul, to be led by a child, or by a man; the poor beast is readie for all, and all is one to that poor willing creature. And so ought we to be in regard of God, and his blessed will with us in all which shall befall us; which is the readiest, and most secure way to all true perfection. *Ut jumentum factus sum apud te.*

Now the happy soul endued with this conformity enjoyeth perfect peace, and great tranquillity of mind, still firmly fixt in desire to the accomplishment of Gods holy will; by which, prosperity or adversity are equally welcome from his blessed hand unto her; yea, pain, or pleasure from thence is truly indifferent to such a soul; Gods honour and glory being all her aim: and thus religiously disposed, she is troubled at nothing, for having no will but Gods, her own is alwaies accomplished, and nothing falls crosse to her, whose superior will, is truly the will of God; in which she most truly joyeth, although the inferior part may be oppressed with contradicting pain; which notwithstanding

ing will be rendred both sweet, and very profitable, because her chief desire in all is ruled by the will of God.

This is the happiest state to which we can arrive in this mortal life; and whereby such peace is obtained to the mind, as even in this present world, it gives some seeming enjoyment of a happy Paradise; no disaster whatsoever, no poverty, nor injury, no calumny nor contempt being able to make the least impression of discontent in such a soul, nor to extinguish her interior joy; she knowing well that nothing befalls her but by his holy order and will, whose loving providence disposeth all for the best; what instruments and second causes so ever he shall please to make use of for effecting it. Yea, the well sealed soul in this vertuous practise of conformity, is troubled at nothing, nor loseth her interior peace, and sweet content: whereas, who wants this vertue of conformity, if they but fail to obtain what they crave by their prayers; they leave off with disgust, and are greatly discomfited: yea, oftentimes so far it doth prevail with them, as they are strongly tempted, and sometimes so greatly overcome, as to abandon their Prayers and other vertuous exercises; which is the greatest victory their mortal enemy can desire to obtain.

This holy Conformity was most perfectly practised by that vertuous person mentioned, *Perreyuan*, when the Arch Bishop, his superior, gave him so crosse, and very sharp an answer to what he most desired in this world, concern-

ing the establishment of his Congregation of the Nuns *de nostre Dame de la Misericorde*; to whom this holy man with great tranquility of mind, made only this mild and humble answer, *Monseigneur*, you may do what you shall think best in this affair; but sure I am that you can do but only that which will be best pleasing to God, with which I shall be exceedingly well content; for I desire only that the accomplishment of his divine will may be done in all. And in that conformity he remained in all perfect peace and tranquility of mind. Whose example, in like cross encounters, is worthy of imitation; there being no expedient in the world so sovereign to conserve true peace and happiness of mind, as is the practise of this great vertue of Conformity; which is best gained by casting our selves entirely into the all embracing arms of divine Providence, to walk with cheerful resignation, in what tract soever his eternal decree hath so ordained to lead us to beatitude; be it through the pricking thorns and brambles of sharp afflictions, by sicknesse, poverty, or persecution: or be it by the favourable paths of honours, wealth, and worldly prosperity; in which we must walk with a disengaged heart, to be ready, with all cheerful submission to Gods holy will; yea, though reduced with *Job* to the deepest misery; his will must be our choice and chief content, and is the only means to make us truly happy in this life; and the highest point of all true Christian perfection.

For these, and many other good reasons it was, that the ancient holy Fathers did so greatly apply themselves to this important studie, and fruitful practise of Conformity; well knowing that true resignation is altogether in deeds, and not in words; taking all things as proceeding from the hand of God: by which vertuous exercise, their greatest adversities were made most pleasing contents; and their life became Coelestial upon Earth: yea finally, *to live, or to die, is all one and the self same thing* (saith Saint Aug.) *when our will is truly united to the will of God.* This union and conformity to the will of God, is the most important businesse which belongs to any Creature, either in Heaven or Earth: for God hath no need of any to execute his designs; and therefore we must not be troubled for want of force, or fit capacity; he can accomplish all he pleaseth without the help of any creature whatsoever; and therefore much more advantage it would be for us to mortifie some disordered appetite, than to exercise the painful work of mortification, for our own meensatisfaction. If God deprives us of health, it is to give us the means, by the practise of Patience, and Conformity for greater merit: we must not therefore be bent to serve God after our own desire, but according to his divine will; for the servant who will do all after his own liking, and contrary to his Masters order, he takes great pains but to lose his Masters good will. It is a true and perfect resignation in all things to the will of God, which renders all we do acceptable to his divine Ma-

jesty; so that we must be entirely resigned in all  
 that we either do or suffer, in bodie, or in soul,  
 in fame, friends, or external goods, for time, or  
 for Eternity, with a perfect conformity to his  
 divine pleasure: yea, his granting, or denying  
 our request must be to us indifferent, for we  
 aiming but at the glory of God, and our own  
 souls greatest happinesse (to both which he  
 knowing what most imports, far better than  
 our selves) we must rest joyfully content with  
 his divine will, though never so contrary to  
 our own, who know not oftentimes what we  
 ask; and therefore with great love and mercy  
 it is that frequently God denies our petition  
 (saith *S. Aug.*) that he may do us a more mer-  
 ciful favour; nor ought we so much to rejoyce  
 for obtaining what we desire, as that it is the  
 will of God which is done thereby: for by this  
 union and conformity with Gods blessed will,  
 we do most truly testifie our love; and by it we  
 do our truest honour and homage to him: and  
 to our selves we also purchase that true content  
 and most happy repose, which is only to be  
 found in a soul thus truly subject unto Gods ho-  
 ly will; for, *who is he that resists it, and findeth  
 peace* (saith *Job. 9.*) but, *be subject to him, and  
 thou art sure to enjoy it. 22.*

Finally, by the practise of this holy Confor-  
 mity to the divine pleasure of God, however  
 our affairs shall succeed; yet our heart will en-  
 joy a most happy and quiet peace, we acknow-  
 ledging God as the Sovereign Lord of all; and  
 as best understanding what most conduceth to  
 his own glory, and to our souls eternal health:

And

And if by sicknesse, or poverty we happen to be hindred from the practise of alms, or of some other accustomed pious exercises; yet as *obedience is better than sacrifice*; so also our willing and perfect submission to Gods holy will, is much more for his glory, and our own souls good, than would have been the greatest alms or corporal austerity, according to our own desire, and proper satisfaction.

*The fourth Exercise of this Rule,  
which is for the practise of  
Patience.*

THE great connexion of this holy vertue with the two former is most apparent; for where there is true humility of heart, and an entire conformity to the will of God, there doubtlesse Patience cannot be wanting to suffer with all cheerful alacrity what crosse or tribulation soever the divine Providence shall be pleased to ordain. This makes up a strong chain of these three holy links of a triple vertue, whereby all our unruly and disordered passions may be fast bound in due subjection both to true reason and piety.

But to speak now here of the proper fruits of holy patience in particular (as before I have of the other two) it may be first observed, that Patience is as a needful bar, and shuts up the door against many sins: for by moderating with patience the grief and great trouble of



mind, we quench hatred, and prevent both anger, and desire of revenge; by which are let in a multitude of pernicious vices; and with much reason it is said by Saint Gregory, to be the wide gate for the great sins of rancor, and wrath, of imprecations, maledictions, blasphemies, murthers, and the like great evils, which are usually harboured in a heart oppressed with impatience, gall, and grief; all which being first taken away by the holy vertue of Patience, the Soul is left in much quiet, and is also thereby enabled to produce true vertuous and perfect operations. And for this respect, some (not untruly) call Patience the preserver of Vertues: for the Soul being disquieted, she cannot rightly exercise her vertuous actions, no nor do any thing well; and therefore she hath great need of patience to keep reason free, and the mind exempt from all passion: for thereby we are best disposed to co-operate with Gods holy Grace; and to turn all to his glory, and to the good of our Soul: nor is there any force so powerful whereby to overcome our greatest enemy; than by the practise of this blessed vertue, which gaineth him by giving confusion; when no other force would be able to prevail.

This vertue also greatly moderates that hurtful passion of sorrow and melancholy; an humour above all the rest exceeding dangerous, and hurtful both to bodie and Soul, unlesse they be defended by that strong Buckler of Patience, from the continual great oppressions of this vicious passion. And therefore though all

vertues

vertues be very requisite, yet Patience is most absolutely necessary for saving of our Souls, by complying with the will of God: the reason is manifest, because our life is so replenished with miseries, that without this needful defence of holy Patience, we shall never obtain the Crown of Victory: *but in your patience you shall possesse your souls:* as that holy man Saint Barnardine of Sienna well understood, who being much urged to get some certain rude persons to be severely punished, for having mocked and much abused him; he answered with a smiling and pleasant countenance: *No, no, let them do so still to me, (said he) for they do but help me towards Heaven, by the way of holy patience.* This was a vertuous, and true humble man; for who is humble, is undoubtedly also patient, because he esteems himself deserving of the evil which he suffereth; yea, and of far greater also. And if we did but search out the true cause of our impatience, and ascend to the source, and true origen; we should find that it proceeds from meer Pride, and self-esteem; which made the holy Bishop of Geneva to advise us, that we should complain the least we could of wrongs: *Because (saith this excellent man) for the most part it is very true, that who complains, doth sin (he means) for want of patience and humility:* for where those vertues are found, there is no complaint; neither for sickness, losse, nor injury: for their patience is invincible in all sorts of afflictions; and humility judging all to be but answerable to their desert; they rather rejoyce to pay here their debt;

debt, hoping to have thereby the lesse account for the future. And certainly much truer perfection there is in suffering cheerfully our crosses and contradictions for the love of God, and with a conformable heart to his blessed will in the time of our temporal or spiritual affliction, than in the most sensible comforts of devotion, by either raptures, or extasies in the time of prosperity and consolation. And to this purpose, that holy Father and learned Doctor of the Church, great S. Gregory saith, that he far prefers the vertue of a patient man, before that of working miracles: and his ground for it is evident; because it is the very fruit it self of the

Cor. 13. highest vertue Charity, which is (saith S. Paul) patient, benigne, envieth not, &c. it is not provoked to anger, thinketh not evil, &c. it suffereth all things, and that in good part for the love of God. This divine love makes the practise of Patience both easie and very pleasing: Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of God may dwell in me. For which cause (saith the same Apostle) I please my self in infirmities, in contumelies, in necessities, in persecution, 2 Cor. 12. in distresses for Christ. Thus blessed S. Paul, shewing us how Patience for the love of God makes all sufferings and affliction whatsoever to be true objects of great comfort and joy: yea, the fruit of this vertue is so very precious, and so highly esteemed by the blessed Saints in Heaven, as doubtlesse they would rather chuse to be deprived till the day of Doom of their present felicity in that enjoyment of their glorious clear vision of God, which they now actually possess;

possesse, than to lose the least degree of grace, which by their patient sufferance of adversity in this life, for the love of God, they have so most happily purchased.

The premisses are clearly verified in the life of that illustrious Virgin, blessed *S. Margaret* Daughter to the King of *Hungary*, and a true mirror of all religious perfection: who grounding the Vertue of Patience upon true Humility, and that upon the love of God; this noble Virgin and most humble servant of *Jesus Christ*, did often weep, and was much troubled in mind because she found no practise for the vertue of patience; wherein notwithstanding she well perceived her religious Sisters to be frequently exercised by strong contradictions to flesh and blood; whereas she by true humble Patience, found her self incapable to be mortified by that way; and the cause is very manifest; for who desires nothing, but purely the will of God, is alwaies content with whatsoever shall happen.

But for the facilitating this practise of holy patience; as well against contempt and injuries, as in all other crosses and troublesome accidents which may befall us; I must here recommend to your serious consideration these ensuing Motives, and convincing Reasons to that end.

First, that whatsoever is in this world most displeasing, and troublesome, is nothing to a true vertuous, and generous heart; which rather is glad of occasions for sufferance, thereby to give proof of its foundation in vertue,  
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and of fidelity to our heavenly Captain Jesus Christ; yea, in true Christian consideration we ought to love them best, who hate us most; they opening to us a happy way, whereby to reap the greatest profit, and truest gain in the holy practise of Patience, of Humility, and of Conformity to Gods holy will; for whose love we suffering with cheerful alacrity, Gods wrath is appeased, our sin is expiated, we obtain much heavenly grace, and gain a most happy peace to our souls; all which but well considered, we ought with the Apostles to rejoyce in all contumely, and injuries suffered for the love of God, much rather than to be angry, or bear the least ill will against such as by exercising our Patience, and other holy vertues, are occasion of so great good, and happinesse to our souls.

Secondly, consider that those troubles do not happen to us, but by the particular providence of God, for his own glory, and our greater good, which is a convincing motive to suffer them with joyful Patience; we accomplishing thereby his blessed will, who ordained them for us before we were conceived in our Mothers Womb, and from Eternity for our greater good; that by a momentary sufferance we might expiate our grievous sin, which had deserved eternal; and therefore to be accepted of with gratitude from so merciful and so loving a God, who is spectator how we play our parts for that Crown which is got by lawfully fighting for it.

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Thirdly,

Thirdly, consider that there is nothing in this world to be endured, which our sins have not justly deserved; and that all put together which can be inflicted upon us in this life, is but a shadow, in comparison of the pains of Hell, or Purgatory; which yet by patient suffering here may be avoided, and everlasting glory gained thereby. Look not therefore with an angry heart upon such as shall make proof of your Christian courage, or your solidity in virtue, and fidelity to God; who useth these temporal afflictions but as instrumental means thereby to procure you that great happiness, which you gain by those occasions to practise holy Patience; and is (saith S. James, c. 1.) a perfect work, for in your Patience you shall possess your souls. Luke 21:

Finally, endeavour by a serious and frequent contemplation of the great uncertainty, and little worth of all worldly affairs, to gain an indifferency to all humane casualties; they all happening by Gods special order and providence; and therefore most undoubtedly for our greater good: and why then should we be troubled, it being Gods blessed pleasure, to which we ought most promptly to conform our selves in all: yea, it ought to be a comfort, and great content to us (saith S. Gregory) when any thing happeneth which crosseth our own desires, considering that so it is ordained by him, who doth nothing but what is most just and good.

Raise therefore your soul with cheerful gratitude to adore his hidden judgments in all  
crosse



Gen. 7. crosse events, which he permits for your greater good: Persevere with peace and tranquillity of mind; for he hath done all things well; and what cause then can you have to be troubled? unlesse you mistrust either his power, or goodness, which yet can never fail.

Hitherto I have spoke rather of the theory of true Patience, and but as concerning it in general. It now remains that I also treat of the needful practise of it, more in particular, and in the chief occasions wherein nature finds most reluctance in the holy exercise of this useful vertue. This will be best performed by shewing that

*We ought to take Affliction, as from the hand of God; and to suffer Persecution with joy.*

YOU may now well perceive by the former part of this exercise, the great goodness and important fruit of this holy Plant of Patience; the knowledge whereof, I doubt not, but will give you a desire to make store of so needful a provision, by the daily and continual occasions which will not be wanting, whereby you may reap great profit to your soul. But to avoid prolixity in so copious a subject; I have thought best to make choice, and here principally to propose to you the needful Exercise of this great Vertue in the above named occasion; wherein, we comporting our selves with a ver-

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trout courage, and humble submission; we shall find the rest but weak; and easie difficulties to be overcome.

And now to shew that we ought to suffer tribulation with content and joy; I will only make choice of some few good reasons out of many, which are sufficient to convince this truth; and may also serve for strong motives to induce us to the meritorious practise of suffering the crosse encounters of this world with a willing cheerfulness for the love of God.

The first Reason for this Truth shall be from our divine Rule and Prototype Jesus Christ himself; who not by his divine and sacred actions hereupon Earth; no, nor by his fervent and assiduous Prayer; nor yet by his Divine preaching, or working of so many miracles, did ever render to his Eternal Father so great honour and glory, as he did by his painful death and passion. From whence it doth plainly follow, and convinceth in all good reason, that we are not able by any other means so highly to honour, and glorifie God, as by a willing and cheerful sufferance of our afflictions, in union and imitation of this our divine example, and in true conformity to Gods blessed will, and all disposing providence. When therefore he shall vouchsafe to trie us by any corporal tribulation; as by the loss of Goods, by privation of friends, or of what else soever most dear to us, we must accept thereof, as an occasion expressly ordained by his heavenly providence, whereby we may render to him due homage and honour; conceiv-  
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ing also that he puts us to such bodily trial; but as a sweet perfume into the fire; to the end; that by a grateful odour of vertuous patience, we may give both good example to our Neighbours, and occasion for them to glorifie our heavenly Father; by seeing so cheerful and humble an acceptation of it, for his love: For *benefits are willingly received by all* (saith that Master of all true Devotion in our age, Sales the holy Bishop of Geneva) *but to receive willingly afflictions, that belongs only to perfect love; which loves them so much the more, because they are not to be loved, but only in respect of the hand which giveth them.*

A second Reason, which ought to make all sufferings very welcome to us, is, for that Heaven and eternal happiness is bought by them:  
 Act. 17. yea, this price it cost the Son of God himself, before he could enter into his glory, (though Heir apparent to the same) and can we then presume to purchase this happy inheritance of that heavenly Father at a lower rate, than he sold it to his only and dearest Son, who both suffered and gave his dearest life for it? O no, the servile slave must not expect to be prefer'd before his Sovereign Lord; it is an excessive favour to be admitted to bear the same yoke with him. All which but duly considered, may well make us ashamed to fear any sufferings, or to flie from any cross; seeing that we profess our selves to be Disciples of a crucified God: for, is it any wise bebecoming the Member of a Head crowned with sharp piercing thorns, to be so nice and delicate, as to flie from all pain or  
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suffering; which notwithstanding is the taxed price of Paradise.

And therefore seeing (as the above named holy Bishop of Geneva saith) that it is but in vain to expect to be glorified with Jesus in Heaven, unless we be first crucified with Jesus here upon earth, let us most willingly embrace his holy Cross, and not by compulsion only, as Symon the Cyrenean did; but much rather with S. Paul, let it be far from us to glory in any thing so much, as in the most honourable Livery of our divine Captain, the Cross, and sufferings of Jesus Christ. Gal. 6. Yea, Reason doth convince us, that the temporal punishment is most happy, whereby we escape an eternal: and such as are here exempt from them, may justly fear lest their far greater punishment be but reserved to another world; there being most assuredly no other way but this to Paradise for the Children of God, but first to passe through this fearful Red Sea of tribulation, before they can hope to enter into that happy Land of Promise.

The third Reason, and which may comprehend all the rest; and is a very strong motive for us to suffer with willing alacrity all manner of tribulation, is; that God the Sovereign Author of nature, hath ordained all the crosses and afflictions which befalls us, for the due punishment of our sinful rebellion and disobedience against his holy Law: for he first placed man in a most happy state in the terrestrial Paradise of pleasure in all happinesse, untill he forfeited that happy state by cursed sin, and thereby made himself, and all his Posterity

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miserable and subject both to death, and to all the calamities incident to humane life, and to eternal damnation; had not Gods infinite great love and mercy to men (more than to Angels) accepted for his satisfaction a temporal punishment from us, in the vertue and merits of the death and Passion of his only dear Son Jesus; for whose sake he vouchsafed to accept of this satisfaction to his divine justice, by these present afflictions which himself here imposeth upon us for that end, and is ever the chief Author thereof; what other Creatures soever he may please to use as instruments for the execution of these his Fatherly corrections.

This was acknowledged by holy Job; when after all the great and many mischiefs which the Diuel had done him, in ruining his House and Children by tempest; in robbing him of his Cattel, and killing his Servants by Thieves; in destroying his Goods by Fire; and finally, having covered his bodie with many smarting Sores, and loathsome Ulcers; yet all this, that holy man did attribute to none but to God himself, and said: *Our Lord hath given, and our Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased our Lord, so it is done.*

Chast Joseph doth as plainly assure us the very same, when his Brethren being greatly affraid of his taking revenge, for their having so grievously abused him; he comforted them saying: *Be ye not affraid, neither let it seeme a hard case to you, that you did sell me into these Countries: for God sent me before you into Egypt for your preservation.*

And finally, to alleage one more for all, did not our Blessed Saviour himself say: *the Chalice which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* here you see plainly that he call it not the Treason of Judas, nor the Persecution of the Jews, Scribes, or Pharisees, but *the Chalice of his Father*; for all chastisements come from him, and are sent by his Eternal order to us for our Good. And therefore this being believed by a Christian (as it ought) how can we be troubled at the afflictions and crosses which are sent from so loving, so prudent, and so good a Father, as most mild and favourable Executioners of his Divine justice; and as most wholesome potions from that skilful and loving Phylician, to cure the sinful surfeit of his soul.

Finally, Afflictions are to us but as bitter Aloes, which the Nurse puts to her Breasts, whereby to wean the Child, and make it willing to come home to its own true Mother: for God by affliction makes us to mislike this world, our Nurse, and to look home unto him, our only true and careful Parent.

Many more motives might be alleaged, for us to embrace afflictions with a willing and patient mind; but it may suffice to remember, that it is the best token of Gods divine love to us, and the very true badge wherewith he hath ever honoured and cloathed his dearest friends; to the good, he sends it for the increase of their merits; and to the bad, for their conversion. In fine, he imparts it unto all as the means for their eternal happinesse; and therefore it

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ought



ought to be received with a cheerful and patient heart.

Pl. 54. 13. But methinks I hear you to complain as David did, that your greatest wrongs are from your nearest Friends, and therefore much more grievous than were they from a professed Enemy. I do easily believe you, but yet you must remember, that ungrateful *Absalom* was much nearer to his tenderly loving Father *David* (the true figure herein of *Jesus Christ*) whom most ungratefully, and more ungraciously he laboured to deprive, not only of his Kingdom and Crown, but also most fiercely pursued him for his very life: as in like manner we see those ungrateful Jews to have done no lesse to our divine Redeemer *Jesus*, whom King *David* did but represent. And therefore you having such presidents for your sufferance, you may rather esteem it a very great honour to be admitted to bear your little share with them.

You may yet peradventure reply; that your chief repugnance & greatest difficulty in suffering these crosses with true patience, is because you never deserved ill from them who most unjustly are the cause of all your sufferings, & most unkindly wrong and persecute you. But neither is this a good excuse for your impatience, which is much rather to be regarded, as the glory of your cause; for had you first offended them by any wrong or injury, your sufferance had been but a just punishment of your offence; whereas you being innocent, your patient sufferance will gain you an incomparable advantage: for nothing doth so much extoll innocency, as

justice; and therefore it was most truly said by  
 wise Philosopher: that the wrong unjustly af-  
 flicted, is his infamy who doth so wrongfully impose  
 upon an innocent person. Holy S. Hierome in-  
 expresse terms affirms the same, assuring us  
 in these most excellent words; that amongst  
 Christians, he who suffereth the injury is not unhappy,  
 but he much rather who did falsely impose it: and  
 though it be an oppression, yet (if it be truly  
 looked upon) it is but a pledge from Gods own  
 proper hand, and as a token of his love, which  
 therefore ought to be received with all cheer-  
 ful patience and alacrity. But he deprives me of my maintenance (say  
 you) and will bring me to much want and  
 necessity. This toucheth indeed very neer,  
 and strikes to the quick: yet take good heed  
 you do not herein the part of a peevish and  
 angry child; from whom if the loving Mother  
 will take but some hurtful bable out of the one  
 hand, it will presently throw down the good  
 that which it hath in the other; and in a pie-  
 ce it will stamp and starve for revenge.  
 But the Child of God must not so lose holy Pa-  
 tience, nor disquiet himself for the loss of  
 that so loving a Father shall take from him,  
 whether immediately himself, or by a friend, or  
 otherwise; as that for the loss of some part of his  
 means, he should thereupon, by his impatience  
 deprive himself of the content which he might  
 sufficiently have taken in the rest which he still  
 enjoys. No, we ought much rather to look  
 down upon the innumerable multitude of those  
 who remain in a far meaner fortune below us;

and who would accompt themselves exceeding happy, and obliged to great gratitude, should they enjoy but some small part of our remainders, and yet perhaps deserve it much better than we, who forget that it is sent us from that blessed hand which disposeth all for our best advantage, if we with conformitie but render our selves cheerfully patient, and humbly conformable to his divine will. For if he deprives us here of our temporal content and happiness, we may rest piously assured that he hath allotted and reserves for us, those others infinitely exceeding them, and to be eternal in Heaven, if through our own wilful fault, we be not the unhappie hindrance thereof our selves.

This I trust will be abundantly sufficient to make large scope for your own better reflections upon this fruitful subject; whereby to pick most profitable fruit of Patience, from these pricking thorns of sharp sufferings, towards the composing of a glorious crown, I hope, for your soul. And for the more ample adornment whereof, I must yet further recommend to you one hard encounter more for holy Patience, though very profitable, by shewing

*How Patience may be practised in  
the occasion of Contempt, and  
Disesteem.*

**T**his is a fierce encounter for holy Patience against scornfull contempt and disdain wherein we are to fight against our selves,

all combats the hardest) and against which we are chiefly strengthened by the help of true humility; which in all occasions of contempt doth serve us as a soveraign Antidote against the swelling anger, which inflames the heart by Pride, that sinful Mother of impatience, and most wicked Plant, from whence proceeds that dangerous Fruit to surfeit all true vertue in the Soul, *self-esteem*, which will not endure the least contempt or contradiction; by reason of the good opinion conceived of their own great merit and desert; which by much more reason they might soon abate, should they but consider the many miseries of Man, and how little ground they have for self esteem; which had it all the advantage that ever noblenesse of birth, or any worth of Ancestors can give; yet never could the greatest Monarch drive up his Pedigree beyond these three descents, of being the Son of a Man; the Grand-child of Earth; and great Grand-child of nothing; which is the lowest point of any created Extraction. And wherefore then so great impatience upon the least neglect of what deserves so small esteem?

To second this former Motive for Humility, take this reflexion more, whereby to strengthen Patience against this strong encounter of contempt; to which though Pride hath naturally exceeding reluctance: yet if we well behold our selves but in the Glass of humane misery, it will be able to compell us to confesse that no contempt is able to exceed the measure of our desert therein; *whose conception* (saith S. Bern.)

is but loathsome impurity : our present state, but a sack of filth ; and our pampered carcase, what is it, but prepared future food for the crawling worms ? And what ground then hath man for such impatience for any contempt or disesteem ? but only from not considering his present state of misery in this world ; wherein he is no sooner born, but also bound both hand and foot, and tossed too and fro in a Cradle, crying at first opening of his mouth, to manifest his entrance into this Vale of tears, and misery ; presaging well thereby the servitude and restless disquiet, labour and calamity in the succeeding life of Man ; wherein his childhood passeth in folly, in fear of Correction, and in ignorance : his youth is rash, passionate, disorderly and voluptuous ; his manhood is subject to be charged with the care of a Wife, Children, and Family, from whence proceeds sollicitude and affliction ; and lastly cometh creeping old age stealing suddenly upon us, whereby we receive many incurable wounds, by decay of our senses, and chief powers, and faculties both of our body and Soul ; for our strength failing us, our hands begin to tremble, our spirits grow faint, our stomachs corrupt, our legs become gowty, our hearing grows thick, our eyes dim, our head bald, our teeth drop away, our memory and understanding much decay : and thus we are perplexed all the daies of our life, with grief, care and calamity ; and yet our death must also end in pain, and exceeding horror.

All which now well considered, and due reflexion made upon this our great abjection, and  
infinite

infinite humane miseries; which ways can we cast our eyes whereon to ground our self esteem, or any pride? yea much rather have we not great cause to judge that no contempt can be so great as we deserve: and yet our happinesse in this surpasseth far all other mortal Creatures, that by enduring with vertuous patience this small temporal contempt, we may avoid the eternal pains which our sins have most justly deserved: and at the self same instant also that we endure here this smal worldly contempt, God & his Angels will highly esteem us in Heaven for the same; yea, it is so truly glorious to suffer here contempt & scorn for the love of God; as it far surpasseth all the austerities suffered by the greatest Saints, which being but voluntary, they might have been omitted without sin; but to fall into impatience, you cannot without offence. Be patient therefore in all occasions of contempt which brings such happy gains; and with a true generous courage, despise all momentary vain glory, and the deceitful esteem of men; seeing that by a vertuous renouncing them, you gain that true honour and glory in the sight of God, which onely is worthy of esteem.

But to be yet further encouraged (and with a more powerful motive) to be patient in the greatest contempt and scorn; you may please but to cast the eyes of your consideration upon the example of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Lord of Heaven and Earth; who after a thousand other vilifying, base, and abject contempts which he endured of the most ungrateful Jews, with all admirable meeknesse and patience;



ciencie; he finally permitted himself so far to be despised, and contemned by those his sacrilegious Enemies; that a most facinorous *Barabbas* should be preferred before him, and esteemed more worthy to live than he.

Be you patient therefore by this your divine example, nor be you troubled at the scorn and small esteem of Men: for as you are not better by their praise, so neither are you worse for their blame, supposing that you give no scandal to them; for the happinesse of your present state depends not on their esteem of you, but on what God knows you to be. Let not therefore the praise of men exalt you, nor their contempt or calumny deject you; which rather contributes, by holy Patience, to your good: whereas their esteem and praise is but dangerous to make you vain-glorious and proud. If you have justly deserved their blame, you ought in reason to suffer it for your sin: and if you are innocent, rejoyce in that you are therein become conformable to *Jesus Christ*, which will be both advantage and great honour for you. If they despise and slight you for some little fault, conceive with how great cause they might much more contemn you, should but all your faults and misery lie open to their view, as plainly they do to God: whereat confound your self, and with an humble heart acknowledge all contempt and scorn as due to you, and therefore not only to bear it with all humble Patience, but also in your heart to judge your self sincerely to deserve much more.

But you will say notwithstanding, that contempt

tempt and scorn are Pills of a very rough operation, and very hard to digest. I cannot deny it: yet as their effect is exceeding profitable, so also their operation may be made both very gentle, and easie, by mixing them with the corrective of a serious ponderation of the great folly in all worldly esteem, vain praise, or opinion of men; which but well considered, it would greatly sweeten these bitter Pills of contempt, and also much enable us to suppress our unruly and cholerick passion against such as show to us some scorn and disesteem; which Gods chiefest Saints (endued with true humility) have ever embraced with all gladness of heart, thereby to have occasion to practise true patience, and a holy contempt of themselves.

You have already seen the practise of Patience proposed in some hard encounters: yet notwithstanding there remains one conflict more, which is not to be mastered but by the powerful help of Divine and conquering Charity, that Queen of all vertues, whereby we loving God above all things with our whole heart and Soul; that also enables us to love our Neighbour, as our selves in God; and our Enemies, in like manner, for his sake; which is that hard and very difficult point so expressly commanded in our Christian practise: and whereof I will speak in particular; first having declared the root and proper Origen, from whence this love of our Neighbour, as also of our Enemy, doth proceed: which is that Sovereign Vertue

## Of Divine CHARITY.

*And first how it is to be practised in loving God.*

**W**E have a double command of Divine Charity: the first, or principal, and of all Commandments the greatest, is declared us by Jesus Christ himself in those expresse and plain words, *Matth. 22. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God from thy whole heart, and with thy whole Soul, and with thy whole mind: this is the greatest and first Commandment: and the second is like to this; thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* This divine love admits no other creature what soever to be otherwise loved by us; for God requires a pure love without all mixture of any other, but what is rightly grounded, and hath no other cause or motive but what is meerly and truly for the love of him. This now both by nature, and Gods expresse command is made so very manifest; as all further proof for it would be but superfluous: and therefore I will proceed to shew in what manner it is to be practised; and principally wherein our obligation lyeth to perform rightly the same.

To shew this with most perspicuous brevity; it is first to be observed, that as vertue, so also the love of God, consists not in devout, and meer verbal expressions, but in reall deeds and action: words may be external good signs of  
this

this holy love; and therefore though commendable, and very good to be used: yet, as bare protestations of friendship, are but meer signs of love, and not the true reality it self; so neither are our best thoughts, or words of this divine love, to be esteemed the true real love of God, but only signs and outward testimonies of the same; and as those outward demonstrations of love to a man, may be without any solid affection in the heart; so we also may speak fair promising words, and have the best thoughts of Divine love; yea say a thousand times over the best composed Prayers, and all this without having the least grain of the right love of God, or any true act of the same; where-in very many are exceedingly deceived. Nor must we likewise flatter our selves with bare good thoughts, or with desires, and affections only in the mind; for they may proceed from a natural and tender feeling of the sense, as well as from a true supernatural motion of grace, and consequently needs must fail in the right practise of Divine Charity; they all being but meer thoughts of the mind, and therefore no true acts of our love, but barely an outward testimony only of the same.

You will now ask me, what finally then are we to understand by the Love of God; and how is Divine Charity to be practised? I answer, that the love of God is an operation of the will, which consists not in thoughts, nor in words, but in real true motions of the soul; for true love is an inclination of the heart towards that which it loves; and therefore the only best way  
to

to discover true acts of Divine Love is to examine the motions, affections, and inclinations of our heart towards God; and how we find our selves interiorly moved with a tender feeling for what most concerns his honour and greatest interest. All which may be made much clearer to your understanding by this familiar example. Consider the motions in the tender heart of a dear loving Wife; who feelth such strong inclinations of dear and tender affection towards her beloved Spouse, as they incline her by a certain sweet and secret violence to do his will, to serve, and to conform herself to whatsoever may be for his best content: yea, to be as sensible of his sufferings as of her own; to feel great content and joy in his presence, and no less languishing desolation and sadnesse in his absence. In fine, even to be ready to lose her own Life, for the preservation of his: all which being the effects but of a meer natural Love; how much more fervent may we well imagine would it be, and far exceed, if supernatural and Divine.

By this it will be easie now to understand that the practise of Charity consists not in words, nor in thoughts, and good desires only; they being but meer productions of the mind, and no real effusions of the heart; wherein the true acts of love, and of perfect Charity consists, and by the forementioned example, you may rightly judge whither the love of God raigns truly in your heart, or no: feel you in your minds divorce from the Creatures of this World; or doth your heart incline you rather to seek Gods  
greater

greater Glory, and to despise all Earthly vanities, in humble hope and expectation of Heavenly Bliss? perceive you this sweet violence alluring you to the service of God, be it never so painful to flesh and blood? are you ready in mind to abandon Honour, Pleasure, Wealth, and your dearest Friends, rather than to forsake Gods service, and the necessary practice of Vertue? is it your greatest fear to fall into Gods disgrace, and no lesse a desire to please him in all things, with a firm resolution to avoid all occasion which may engage you to sin? for if you feel these holy dispositions and affections in your soul (at least in some reasonable degree) you may then rest humbly confident, that you haply enjoy this holy Charity; nor will it be hard for you to produce true acts of the love of God.

You now sufficiently perceive that the practise of this sovereign Vertue consists not in verbal expressions, nor yet in holy desires, nor in the best thoughts of the mind; all which (as is said) may proceed from a natural tenderness of sense: but it consists in real actions of the will; in true motions of the soul; and in the fervent inclinations of our heart towards God: nor was it by words, or thoughts, but by real deeds that God himself hath shewed his infinite great love unto Man; giving us both Heaven and Earth, together with all the Treasure, both of Nature and Grace; yea, his dearest and only Son, his Body, his Soul and Divinity, together with all the infinite and most sacred merits of this our loving Redeemer Jesus Christ, that true

Original,



Original, whereby we ought to draw the copies of all true Divine Love; doing our actions purely to obey and please him; and to suffer all crosses and afflictions, all detractions, contempts and contradictions whatsoever most cheerfully for his sake, and in perfect conformity to his most blessed will; for true Charity curbeth our passions, and compelleth our corrupt and sloathful nature to the practise of vertue, by supplying the necessities of the Poor with part of our superfluities; and by exercising the works of mercy both corporal and spiritual, as just occasion may require at our hands; for by this means our love will be loyal, and conformable to that of Jesus Christ, which was accompanied with all gracious favours; and doing good unto all: as also with all manner of sufferings for our sake, which are the strongest arguments of a real, and fervent love; and such as in justice and due gratitude, we are bound to return to him, the best we can, by a sovereign love above all Creatures whatsoever; and with our whole heart and soul.

But here some timorous soul perchance may be perplexed, for that they find their love too strong fixed in their heart to several Creatures; and with more tender sense and feeling in their regard, than they have for God himself.

But to take away this scruple wrongly grounded sometimes in a timorous soul; it is to be considered that there is a certain tender, intensive and very sensible love; which inhereth most firmly to flesh and blood, than it doth to our reason, or judgement: as it well appears in

Mother, who is far more sensibly touched with the least painful accident which hapneth to her suckling Infant; than she would be, if the same befall to her eldest Son; though other wayes a verie worthy, well qualifi'd and a much more deserving Child; and whom with a pre-erogative, or love of preference, she far prefers before the other; as it would soon appear, were not her will and judgment to make choice of the two, which she would be content to lose.

This sensible love may be more ardent, and more intense and sensible to a paltry Dog, for a Bird, or some other irrational Beast, than for a Child, or a Friend; who yet appreciatively, and by love of preference, are both beloved, and prefer'd without comparison. Now to the former scruple, it is to be observed; that although in all justice we ought to love God with this sensible and tender love; yet such is his fatherly great goodnesse, and condescendency to our frail nature, as he contents himself with a pre-erogative love, whereby we love and honour him by preference to all other Creatures whatsoever; and choose rather to lose all the honor, Wealth, and Pleasure in the World, than deliberately to offend him by any mortal sin.

This is that Love which God requires of us; and is content with a rational, and spiritual love, wherewith we embrace him with all the force and power of our superior will. And yet how often and most ungraciously, do we prefer some meer brutal pleasure, or a trifling point of imaginary honour; before his divine Pleasure, and expresse command?

O let us hereafter be much more careful to  
 certify the fidelity of our love to so good a God;  
 by preferring his blessed will before any sinful  
 inclination of our corrupt sensuality: propos-  
 ing much rather to our selves the example of  
 our divine Lord and Master Jesus Christ in that  
 his bitter Agony in the Garden of Olivet: where,  
 though by the lively view of those sharp tor-  
 ments of his most bitter Passion, the tender love,  
 and feeling to Flesh and Blood were made them  
 to him so very sensible, as that, according to  
 his inferiour will, he beseeched his Heavenly  
 Father to free him from that bitter Chalice;  
 yet by his superior part, and by the rational and  
 better portion of his blessed soul, he absolutely  
 prefer'd his eternal Fathers decree; and by a  
 true pretiative love, and final preference; he  
 rather choosed to obey to the very death of a  
 reproachful Cross, than to spare that most  
 pure victim, and innocent carcase; though na-  
 ture and sensible love was moved to avoid those  
 excessive torments. In honour of which Divine  
 love and obedience of Jesus Christ unto his  
 Heavenly Fathers will, we ought to resolve, that  
 when by some sinful temptation our inferiour  
 will, or sensuality, shall be ardently moved to  
 vice; that reason, and our superior part, do  
 then pretiatively prefer Gods blessed wil: where-  
 by if in that combat our rational and superi-  
 our part keep firm and constant to God, we  
 shall make profit by such a temptation, in cou-  
 rageously preferring his honour, before the na-  
 tural ardor, and intensive inclination to Flesh  
 and Blood; whereby Divine Charity is rightly  
 practised;

practised; and we make perfect acts of the true  
love of God: which being the right accomplish-  
ment of his first, and principal commandment;  
let us now see in the next place, what is requi-  
red for our complying with the second; which

*Of the Love of our Neighbour: and in  
what manner it is to be practised  
by us.*

**O**ur Blessed Saviour having declared the  
first and chief Commandment of the Law  
of God; he there immediately joyneth the  
second (which is like to the first) commanding  
us to love our Neighbor as our selves; they be-  
ing but as two streams from the self same spring;  
or as two branches from one very root, both  
originally proceeding from the same habit of  
divine love; and both together do constitute  
his great and divine vertue of Charity: nor  
can they be separated; for who saith that he  
loveth God, and yet hateth his Neighbour, is  
truly called a *Liar* by S. *John*. 11. Ep. 4.

This is a vertue seated in a heart filled with  
love and compassion towards our Neighbours;  
with a love which is chaste and general, without  
distinction either of Persons or Sex; holy and  
embracing all truly in God, and sincerely lo-  
ving them for his sake; rejoycing in the per-  
fections and Heavenly favours communicated to  
them, and compassionating their infirmities, be  
they corporal, or spiritual; and not omitting to

assist them by our best service, or comfort; if not by deed, at least to mitigate their sorrow the best we can; by shewing compassion for their suffering, and a feeling sense of their affliction, with promise by our Prayers, and best endeavours to afford them what help we can.

- This great vertue (as by a final will and testament) Christ Jesus at his last supper recommended to us: *love ye one another* (saith he) *as I loved you*; that is, purely in God, and with a spiritual and supernatural love: for this Divine Charity is a twofold, or double love, embracing both God, and our Neighbour fast linked in the self same vertue, as two Rings united in one Circle, and inseparable from each other: for by the same vertue of Charity, wherewith we love God, we also love our Neighbour in God, who hath so earnestly commanded, and so very frequently recommended this fraternal Charity to us; and left it as the very badge, and truest mark, or character, whereby the world should know you to be my Disciples, *that you love one another*. This fraternal Charity is so true a sign of being the Disciples of Jesus Christ; as he would be greatly mistaken who thinks he loves God, without loving his Neighbour: *For he who loveth not his neighbour, whom he seeth, how will he love God, whom he seeth not?* saith the same beloved Disciple.
- Joh. 13. *that you love one another.*
- I Joan: 4.20. *whom he seeth, how will he love God, whom he seeth not?* saith the same beloved Disciple.

But you desire (it may be) to know what is here understood by this notion of our Neighbour. I answer, that all men without exception being made to the likeness of God, and who are yet capable



capable of Eternal Glory by the self same price  
 of Christs most precious Blood; and all generally  
 to be accounted our Neighbours. For all you  
 and Brethren (saith Jesus Christ) and one is your  
 Father be that is in Heaven. And therefore;  
 if Brethren, and from the same Father, and  
 with right to the same heavenly inheritance;  
 then by good consequence they needs must be  
 our near allied Neighbours; and ought to be  
 loved in this sort; with all love and indifferen-  
 cy; as well poor as rich, noble, and the mean-  
 est sort; English, French, or Spaniards; Pagan  
 or Jew; that holy love embraceth all the world;  
 without exclusion of Nation, or condition, and  
 with a charitable affection, it desires eternal  
 felicity to everyone, as to himself.

O what a happy union and concord would this  
 love cause amongst men, were it observed, as  
 the Law of God commands? or but according  
 to the example of Jesus Christ, should we be  
 ready to expose our temporal life, to preserve  
 our Neighbour from his eternal death, when  
 just occasion should require it. For in this we  
 have known the Charity of God; because he hath  
 yielded his life for us; and we ought to yield our  
 lives for our Brethren. For if our love be ground-  
 ed upon self-interest, and for some humane  
 respect, or self satisfaction, which may be reay-  
 sed from a rich, or learned man, or from some  
 noble and bountiful person; or finally, from  
 one of a pleasant and delightful conversation;  
 such a love is but mercenary or sensual, and  
 not merely humane, and a plain natural affec-  
 tion; such as either Turks or Pagans may ex-



- ercise upon the self same motive, as well as men  
it being but proper self-love, and not his fra-  
ternal Christian Charity, so much inculcated  
Col. 3. by S. Paul: above all these things have Charity,  
which is the bond of Perfection. Saint Peter as ear-  
nestly recommends the same to us: before all  
1 Pet. 4. things having mutual Charity amongst your selves.  
By which so earnest Exhortations, we may suf-  
ficiently conjecture the great necessity of this  
virtue which these two sovereign Princes of the  
Church have so greatly charged us to embrace  
above all things (saith S. Paul) and before all (saith  
S. Peter) it being the first and greatest of the  
three Theological Vertues, Faith, Hope, and  
1 Cor. 13. Charity, these three (saith S. Paul) but the greatest  
13. of these is Charity. And though now this au-  
thority should be sufficient to perswade the pre-  
dilection of this holy vertue, yet plain experience  
makes also manifest the great necessity thereof  
there being neither Kingdom, nor community  
which can subsist without fraternal love, and  
tie of mutual Charity; for discord and division  
getting once place, there needs no other Enemy  
to bring them a speedy ruine but themselves  
if you bite and eat one another, take heed you be  
Gal. 5. not consumed by one another. The multitude of  
the holy Christian primitive Believers were so  
perfectly endued with this fraternal and holy  
love, as they seemed all to have but one heart  
and one soul. The Romans were highly extolled  
Act. 4. by the Maccabees for their united love and  
concord, which made them Masters and Com-  
manders of the world; but envy and emulation  
having broken their uniting tie of mutual  
love

love amongst themselves; then discord and division soon brought that all conquering Monarchy to be the prey, and scorn unto their greatest Enemies.

I need not exemplifie (in due proportion) the ruine of a Family, where mutual and fraternal love is wanting: the same would also soon appear in any religious Community destitute of true Christian Charity amongst themselves; for their habitation would resemble Hell, and all the inhabitants would be most unhappy in the same.

But you must here observe, that this mutual love of our Neighbour in a Christian, must far excel that natural, carnal, and meer humane love forementioned in the Romans; as also that which now Pagans have, by meer motives from flesh and blood: for Christian fraternal Charity must be a spiritual love of God, in God, and for his sake, who doth command it: well grounded also upon the practise of Patience, of humility, and benignity; far from ambition or envie; not ruled by self-love, or interest; but rather yielding with mildnesse, than to contest with obstinacy; In fine, in bearing with each others imperfections. And in one word to say all which may best declare to us the nature, and true effect of fraternal and Christian Charity; is with *S. Paul*, to know, that it is *benigne and patient*; that is, it *suffers, and doth good unto all*: which are the two most important points to conserve this fraternal love and union with one another: for we all being full of imperfections and faults, it is necessary that we

bear one with another; and so very frail and needy, as we want our Neighbours assistance to relieve, and help us in several wants. Now in the mutual performance of them both, we accomplish that command of the great Apostle; *Bear ye one anothers Burdens, and ye shall fulfil the Law of Christ.* And therefore S. Aug. had good reason to assure us, that true Brotherly Charity did most appear in suffering with the unpleasing and troublesome humours of our Neighbour; in conniving at their imperfections and tedious importunities; and with courteous affability and fitting condescendency, both to hearken, to answer, and to content and succour them with a compassionate heart the best we can; for so doing, *you shall walk worthy of the vocation, in which you are called, with all humility and mildness, with patient supporting one another in Charity,* saith S. Paul.

Gal. 6.

Eph. 4.

Cor. 12.

This fraternal love and union is fitly expressed by the Metaphor which the same Apostle gives us of that union and great conformity betwixt the several Members in the Bodie of Man: they helping and serving each other; for if one receive hurt, all the rest do both feel, and concur what they can to the remedie, and being cured, all partake of the joy. In like manner ought we to comport our selves to each other by fraternal love and compassion, doing for them, as we would be done to our selves; to compassionate their wants and sufferings, as if our own: rejoicing at their good, and condoling for their disasters in any kind whatsoever; be they corporal, or spiritual, according

to S. Paul, rejoice with the glad, and weep with those who mourn; for this is a most assured sign of true Christian love to our Neighbour, and of true fraternal Charity, if we mourn at their offending God, and rejoice at their increase in vertue. Rom. 12. 10.

This holy vertue of fraternal Christian love, well grounded in a vertuous Soul, undoubtedly will prove the sovereign antidote against all envy, and sinful malice; so usually committed by several waies of obloquy, and unjust revenge against our Neighbour: whom, if we love like our selves (as God commands us to do) we shall abstain undoubtedly, from doing that ill to him, which we would not have to be done to our selves: and by that needful vertue, we shall be strongly armed against the greatest assaults which any passion of anger, envy, or ambition will be able to beget in our Souls: for this holy love is not led by the blind guid of fancy, or passion; nor yet by the motion of sense, or of a meer natural feeling tendernesse in the heart: this Christian and fraternal love is much more spiritual, and better founded in reason, proceeding also from the superior part of our soul, and regardeth chiefly the will of God. It must be active, and not remain in meer inward speculation; but appear much rather outwardly by deeds, and holy practises: Not in word, and tongue (saith S. John) but in deed and truth; for he that hath the substance of this world, and seeing his Brother in want, shall shut his bowels from him, how doth the Charity of God remain in him?

1 Joh. 3.

Now

Now to preserve this Charity of Brotherhood  
 Rom. 12. one towards another, as S. Paul exhorts us; I  
 10. find no better means, than first, that we speak  
 ill of no bodie: for we should but shew our e-  
 mulation, at the least, or envie against that per-  
 son, which yet is contrary to this fraternal  
 love; for although our Neighbour may have  
 some fault, yet doubtlesse we may also find  
 sufficient good to be said of him; which as sweet  
 honey from the flower, we ought much rather  
 to suck with the innocent Bee, than to draw  
 out poyson with the venemous Spider. O no,  
 for Christian Charity obligeth me, that in case  
 I can do my Neighbour no other good, yet at  
 least I should bear with his nature, though cross  
 to mine; and suffer patiently his troublesome  
 humour (as sometimes, undoubtedly, he must  
 also mine) nor ought I to disesteem him for ha-  
 ving a less talent than others; it being from Gods  
 meer free gift that all good is received, who  
 will require of us an exact accompt of all, who  
 have received more than he; and for which all  
 must take heed, lest Gods liberality should  
 cause some vain glory in us, instead of hum-  
 ble and thankful gratitude, which all do so du-  
 ly owe.

2ly. In case that our Neighbor shall give us  
 some cause of offence, we must not therefore  
 seek our revenge; we being all Brothers in Christ,  
 and members of that Body, his chaste Spouse the  
 Holy Catholick Church. For what true mem-  
 ber desires revenge of the other; or what Boy  
 was ever so foolish, as for biting his tongue,  
 would therefore beat out his own teeth. In like  
 manner



manner, if our Neighbour shall do us some wrong, (he being a true member of the said mystical body) we ought willingly to pardon him, without desire of revenge; lest having received one mischief by his abuse, or calumny, we our selves make it two, by sinful revenge, *rendering evil for evil*, quite contrary to the Apostle's command.

Rom. 12.

17.

ally. To preserve this holy Charity and Christian brotherhood one towards another, (as the same Apostle mentioned, doth call it) we must depose not only our desire of revenge, but also all ill will and bitterness of mind, against all such who have offended us; as our divine Redeemer so expressly requires of us all, under that fearful threat of the most grievous punishment from his Heavenly Father, if we forgive not *every one his Brother, from his heart*. It is not

Mat. 18.

34.

teeth-outward friendship that will suffice, if inward aversion shall remain; nor can we any otherwise expect pardon from God, but as we our selves shall pardon those who trespass against us. *Forgive then, and you shall be forgiven: for in the same measure as you shall use unto others, with the like it shall be measured to you.*

Mat. 28.

Mat. 7;

Be very careful therefore that no aversion take root by continuance in your heart; nor that by outward expression, or strangeness in your carriage, you give way to the least appearance thereof: for that would be both scandalous, and breed also the self same sinful fear of aversion in your Brothers heart, as it makes in your own: which the longer it there continues, the harder



harder it will be cured, and much lesse apt to receive any fitting remedy.

Finally, as fraternal love and Christian Charity is greatly preserved by mild and courteous words; so nothing is more contrary, and destructive to the same, than rough, scornful, contradicting, and imperious language; which is not only the source from whence most quarrels do irreconcilably proceed; but also the many other most pernicious effects which spring from those capital vices, of rancor, envy and hatred, Against which you now have seen the force of that sovereign Antidote fraternal Charity, so expressly commanded by Jesus Christ, not only to be exercised towards our Neighbour; but towards our greatest Enemies also, the hardest task of all the rest; though likewise the most Heroick victory wherein holy Patience can triumph; as will I hope plainly appear by this ensuing discourse.

*Of the Love of our Enemies, and in what manner it is to be practised.*

I Know not how I may better introduce you into this discourse; than by the way of that expresse and plain command of Jesus Christ. *Love your Enemies; do good to them who hate you; pray for them who persecute and calumniate you.* This is the manner which our Divine Redeemer in these absolute terms commands us to comport our selves towards them who hate, persecute, and calumniate us. Whereby may be gathered

red the liveliest Character that can be given of the greatest Enemy : for whom notwithstanding Christ himself commands us to love them, to do all good offices, and to pray for them.

But some will answer (saith S. Augustine) that this is a very hard and difficult thing. I cannot deny it (saith he) to be extremely laborious, thus to comply with it in this World ; were it not that it gains us so immense a recompence in the other : yea, and even in this, of Gods Enemies that we were before we become thereby his Friends, and the happy Children of our Father which is in Heaven. This is the surest mark of that our blessed adoption : for to love our Friends, (saith Tertullian) that is a thing common unto all : but to love an Enemy, that is proper only to a Christian.

This Lesson our Divine Master Jesus hath taught us both by word and example, as also by the whole practise of his Life; which was a continual exercise of Love, and doing good for evil : as also was his death the sovereign sacrifice in expiation for their sin ; and finally to purchase a most happy life for them, who put him to the cruelest death upon a reproachful Crosse ; from whence, the very first word which fell from him amongst all those his most cruel torments, was not to threaten, nor to demand revenge upon those his enraged, and most sacrilegious Enemies; but to crave pardon for them, who had so ill deserved it : and he alledged the strongest reasons to his eternal Father for their excuse; beseeching him, to pardon them, because they knew not what they did.

Luk. 23.  
34.

This

This Love and Charity taught by our blessed Saviour, is very different from what the Jews were taught by the Doctors of their Law: you have heard (saith Jesus Christ) that it was said, thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thy Enemies, (so taught the Pharisees, but not the Law) but I say to you, love your Enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and abuse you; that you may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven; who maketh his Sun to shine upon the just, and bad, and raineth upon the just, and unjust: for if you love them who love you, what reward shall you have? do not also the Publicans this? What more expresse, or clear command than this could Jesus Christ have given us? or what reasons can be conceived more strong and convincingly perswasive? or what motives more powerful to excite us unto this love of our Enemies, than are expressed in these words; and thereby to give us such assurance to be made the adopted Children of a Heavenly Father, by our imitation of that his most admirable and infinite goodnesse towards us, his most ungrateful and sinful Creatures?

Now that the weighty importance of this so expresse a command might the better appear; the Angelical Doctor S. Thomas divinely relates the reason; assuring us that the true love of our Enemy, is the most pure, the most divine, and the highest act of Charity which can be performed by Man: which great truth is not avouched without proof by most evident reason; for there is nothing that Man can do, which appeareth so manifestly to be done by him so purely

purely for the love of God, is to love his greatest Enemy: for you may love God in desire of your own good, and to gain Heaven thereby: you may also (and most usually) love your friend, because he is your friend, or for some good humor, and sympathy, or for some pleasing quality, or for profit, honour, or the like which may be reaped by his conversation. In fine, you may love another in respect of some content, or benefit, and all this is but merely for your own commodity; as both Turks, and Barbarous Pagans do; yea, even brute Beasts themselves can love in such a manner. By which you will easily perceive that the noblest act of a Christian, and of greatest merit, is this love of our Enemy; because nature hath no part nor interest at all therein; and by good consequence that love must needs be the purest love of God, for whose sake merely an Enemy can be loved, there being no motive from him at all for it, but rather of detestation and hatred; should not the love of God, and obedience to his command perswade you both to love, and to do him what good you can: which act, as it proceeds from the greatest vertue, and by which we render to God the most sovereign honour and homage; so likewise it confers unto Man the highest dignity whereof any mortal Creature can be conceived capable, it making him thereby the adopted Child of a Heavenly Father. And therefore as this vertue is so very precious in the sight of God, so ought it to be as dearly esteemed, and faithfully practised by us, in loving and doing what good we can to  
our

our greatest Enemies; it being a vertue, both so grateful to God, and so infinitely advantageous to our own souls: for by how much the more purely that it proceeds from true Charity, so much the more grateful it needs must be unto God, and more meritorious for our selves; and by consequence it is most manifest, that they who pray most heartily for their greatest Enemies do exercise an act of greatest vertue; it being an act proceeding from the highest degree of Charity, and whereby we render to God the greatest honour and homage which we are able to give to his Heavenly Majesty. Nor have we any greater assurance of Gods pardoning our sins, than by our forgiving such as offend us: for that is the very Rule and measure of his mercy; and we can only expect from him, that he forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And truly no Enemy can be so bad, but that for Jesus Christ his sake, he may be pardoned, although he deserves it not for his own; nor can his offending us have any comparison with the grievousnesse of our offending God: for which we must expect no pardon from him, unless we also pardon such as have offended us; and that entirely, and from the very bottom of our heart. All which abundantly perswades us to embrace this generous vertue of loving our Enemies: to which I will yet further add some congruous motives, whereby the better to confirm our resolutions for that holy practise, by making good, and serious reflections upon these ensuing points.

Luk. 6

Mat. 18.

35.



First, that we have none so watchful as our Enemy, to observe our faults and errors, and to let us understand them; which we should never know from a friend; nor yet have by his means that good occasion to reform our lives.

We pay wages to Masters, and Governors; and yet none are so carefully observant to let us know our misdemeanours, as are our greatest Enemies; and that also *gratis* without pay. He boldly tells us true, when our Friend dares not speak; and he serves us as a needful curb, by publishing our vice, and will plainly advertise us if we go amisse, nor dare we do ill in his sight; whereas a friend seldome prevents any thing of all this great harm; but rather (and very frequently) he proves a motive, and great cause of our doing ill. When a friend exalts us by flattery, and highly praiseth us; our Enemy (much more for our good) doth abase and decry us down, lest we should grow proud and insolent. Yea, when prosperity extols, and makes us vain, and by flattering applause puffs up our soul with dangerous pride, our Enemy will keep us down by persecution, and administers to us thereby the sovereignest Antidote to preserve us from that contagious sin.

If Enemies were not necessary for our good, God would not permit them; but they are exceeding profitable to the good, for their exercise of holy Patience, and of other vertues; or if the Church had not had Tyrants, Heaven would not have had those glorious Martyrs; and



and were there no Enemies, we should not see so many holy men; yea, daily experience doth plainly manifest the great profit which is reaped by Enemies: for avoiding of whose murmurations, and detractions, we are made much more wary and diligent in all our behaviour and actions: yea, we must regard them, as the Ministers of Almighty God, and as true promoters of our salvation; and therefore they well deserve our love, although they seem to cut, and mangle our reputation by the hard blows of slander, and malicious calumny; whilst we are thereby but polished as chosen stones, and made more fit to be placed in that happy Building in Eternity, if by true vertuous patience we make but our good use thereof: and therefore they well deserve our love, as also great compassion; considering what great harm they frequently do cause to themselves, whilst they so greatly profit us. And therefore if it be but natural to love those who do most good for us, how just cause then, and great reason have we to love our Enemies, who by their wrong and persecution do help us with such powerful means to obtain our beatitude; if we our selves shall make but right use thereof.

All which but well considered, how can we prefer a disordinate appetite of revenge, out of some litle fume of inconsiderate choler; or perchance for an imaginary point of honour, before the due obedience to our Sovereign Lord and Masters expresse command: or shall we rather renounce the spirit of true Christianity, and the greatest happiness to our souls,

than

than to let Gods expresse command, reason,  
and our own greatest good to prevail against  
our brutish passion of revenge; and which leads  
us to endlesse perdition?

And such now as find so great a difficulty to  
love an Enemy, may well conceive it a much  
harder thing to endure the eternal flames of  
Hell; for choose we must one of the two, the  
beloved Apostle assuring us; *that who loveth not* Joh. 2.  
*is guilty of death*; he means of that death which  
is eternal: but now undoubtedly he chooseth  
very ill, who will rather be damned for ever,  
than love his Enemy, whom under pain of e-  
ternal punishment he is commanded to love:  
and that, *not in word, nor tongue; but really in* Eph. 1. 3.  
*deed, and in truth*, saith S. Paul, not by feigned  
complements, but by real and effectual truth;  
for Charity is a burning fire, active and appea-  
ring in all necessary services towards our Neigh-  
bour, doing good for evil with a cordial and  
gracious affability for the love of God; for  
what measure we shall use to our Neighbour  
herein, the self same will God use unto us.  
And therefore who will not pardon their Ene-  
mies, such by saying their *Pater noster*, and  
praying God to forgive them, *as they forgive* Mat. 17.  
*those who have trespassed against them*, they do  
not pray, but rather demand a most heavy  
curse and malediction upon themselves; for they  
expressly, & in true effect demand that God should  
not forgive them, like as they forgive not those  
who have offended them. Do you therefore  
your self that first to your Neighbour, which  
you desire that God should do for you: For so

Mat. 18. *shall my Heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother, from your hearts.*

And it is also most evident, that all injuries whatsoever which can be done them by others, are exceeding small, in comparison of that great hurt, which they do to themselves, in killing their own soul by that wicked sin of hatred and revenge; whereby they become like unto him, who to tear his Enemies Garment, he pierceth his own bodie with a mortal wound. For the wrong from an Enemy concerns but the bodie only, or our goods, or good name; but hatred and unlawful revenge, is that which killeth the soul, by depriving it of the grace of God, whereby it doth spiritually live. And moreover it obligeth us yet farther to ask pardon, to confesse, to do penance for it; and finally to reconcile our selves with whom we were angry; in all which there is far more difficulty, than had been at the first in suppressing our anger, by casting it speedily from our thoughts, as we do sparkles of fire which fall upon our cloaths, or by an act of humble patience, conserving thereby our selves in true Charity, and peace.

But to all these reasons, you will answer: that if you shall pardon your Enemy, he will become much worse thereby, and insolent; nor will he fail to make his own greater advantage against you. I answer, that you ought much rather to perswade your self the contrary; and to hope that he will become better: and in case he should not, yet you will gain this advantage, in being sure to become better

by

by it, you imitating God himself, who pardons us, although we daily offend his heavenly Majesty in a much more grievous and hainous manner.

O but I shall be esteemed (say you) of a mean spirit and base: Not so by any wise, or true judgment, and as for that of the world, their wisdom is declared by the Holy Ghost, to be but foolishnesse with God, and contrary to all true goodnesse and Charity; but as for people of true wisdom and piety, who have but the fear of God, they will esteem you much more for it; and be you most certainly assured, that there is much more vertue, and true generosity of courage, to Master, and to revenge our selves of our own disordered, and brutal passion of anger, by moderating and subduing it to the Law of God, than by conquering the greatest Enemy alive; for we conquer, and assuage by it Gods choler and just indignation against our sin; *forgive, and you shall be forgiven. If you forgive men their offences, your Heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences: he will deal with us, as we deal with our Neighbour; seekest thou revenge of him? then God will be revenged of thee for far greater injuries; for judgment without mercy to him, that hath not done mercy: and therefore he hath most truly compassion and pity upon his own Soul, who pardoneth his Enemy, and he is as cruel and unjust to it, who seeks revenge, which God reserving to himself, and so expressly charging himself therewithall; it would be both sacrifice and sinful presumption for us to under-*

1 Cor. 3.  
19.

Lu: 6:38:  
Mat: 6:14

Jam: 2:  
13.

Rom. 12. to do this the proper office of God.

But he hath offended me so oftentimes, say you.

*Ans.* Hath he offended you so often as you have offended God? and had you yet pardoned him 77 times, yet were you obliged still also to pardon him, should he oftner offend you; according to the word of Jesus Christ, *Matthew* 18.

But I cannot shew to him signs of love or friendship, by reason of my much aversion against him.

*Ans.* It is not because you cannot, but because you will not; for should the King oblige you either under some great punishment, or by promise of a great reward, you would doubtlesse do it very speedily; and will you refuse to do it for Gods sake, and to get Heaven, that which you would do for humane fear or recompence.

Finally, we know right well, that sooner or later, we must from our heart forgive all injuries, if we intend to be saved; and wherefore then defer we the same? seeing that thereby we do so much the more increase our sin, and augment Gods offence; we lose much merit, and put our selves in great danger to die impenitent, and by that means to perish for all eternity.

But if these reasons shall not prevail with you to pardon, and bear love to your Enemies: let good examples at the least perswade you to it.

The first is given us by Jesus Christ himself whose whole life hath been a continual praise for the love of his Enemies; and his death a bloody sacrifice to expiate their sin; as well those his words upon the cross do testify: *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Which divine example moved S. Steven, with his knees upon the ground, to beseech God to pardon those who were actually stoning him to death. Luke 23.  
34.

2ly. We read that S. Gregory Naziansen being greatly crossed, and most unjustly persecuted, was perswaded to take of his Enemies a just revenge; he made them this mild and true Christian reply; *that is not the lesson (my children) which Christ hath taught us, nor what the Gospel commands; no let but my Persecutors be converted (saith he) and I shall be sufficiently revenged; be they but saved, and my anger is entirely satisfied.*

3ly. The History of Sapphira is sufficiently known; who for having refused to pardon his Enemy at the very time of his going to obtain a glorious Crown of Martyrdom; he lost that happy Palm; renounced his Faith, and became a most infamous Apostata; as we read in the life of Saint Niceforus Martyr upon the ninth of February.

4ly. Saint Ambrose reports of Theodosius the great, that he was never more content than when he gave pardon to some who had offended him; and that by how much the more he found himself moved to anger against the person, so much the more he was inclined for to pardon him; and which he never refused, so



often as by any offender it was but desired of him : so perfectly did he govern himself by the holy spirit of true Christian Charity ; which is  
 ¶ Cor. 13 *patient, benigne, is not provoked to anger, suffereth all things, nor doth it think evil to any; but embraceth all in true love, and therefore far from desiring revenge.*

*Against the most pernicious practise of the Duellists.*

**B**UT to all this the Duellists will make you answer, that after all your reasons, examples and authority here produced to love and forgive our Enemies; yet notwithstanding (say they) and for what else can be said in that behalf; none can denie, but that the affronted, and much injured person doth lose his honour before all the world, if he forgive his Enemy without revenge.

This their deluding pretence hath little force to justifie that most wicked revenge; as if Gods divine honour were not to be preferred before that vain, false, and but meerly imaginary honour of Man; who sacrilegiously presumes to challenge Gods special prerogative, which he so particularly reserves to himself, as his own proper right; with expresse prohibition, that no creature whatsoever should be so impudently  
 Heb. 10. bold as but to meddle with it; for we know  
 30. (saith the great Apostle) him that said, Revenge  
 Deut. 32. to me, I will repay it; this is the rightful Pre-  
 35. rogative which God chalengeth, as due to none

none but himself; and can any Creature then be so impudently bold as to usurp to himself that due right which his Sovereign Lord and divine Creator hath so expressly reserved as his own proper and rightful Prerogative, privately, and to the exclusion of any Creature whatsoever; which being but well considered, who dare be so sinfully bold, as to challenge the least right to *Revenge*; or to defend that most wicked and pernicious crime, by saying (foresooth) that we are bound to maintain our honour, though to this great dishonour of God; who so expressly declares to us by his Prophet *Esay* 48. 11. that he will not *give his glory to another*; which, notwithstanding, we most wickedly make bold to rob him of, by challenging this detestable revenge.

O but it is contrary to reason (they yet reply) to endure abusive affronts, and injuries without taking just revenge; nor shall I ever after be able (say they) to shew my face amongst men, if I shall put up so great a wrong.

This their most usual objection, is no better than the former; that seeming only against their own reason, which doth so greatly, and very grossly deceive them. Nor yet must reason be our sole guide, if we profess our selves to be Christians: for otherwise we may as well refuse to believe the blessed Trinity; the incarnation of the Son of God; or him to be born of a Virgin; and many other of the chiefest Mysteries of our Christian Faith, if we take Reason for our only Rule and Guide. O no, Christianity far transcends the short reach of humane

mane Reason : we must not therefore so greatly wrong both God and our own selves, as to take this false seeming appearance of our mistaking reason, as our guide for maintaining this our too much pampered darling of *Worldly reputation*, with the neglect of our principal Guide, and chief Rule of a Christian man, which is holy Faith, a Rule far above Reason; which is but the guide properly of a rational, and not of a Christian man; and which is very often both corrupted and blinded by passion, as also by our unruly sense and appetite.

The Duellists yet farther make much use of this ensuing impious discourse, for pretext of justifying their most wicked practice. Ones honour (say they) is much dearer to a man, than his life: But it is lawful to kill another for defence of his life. And therefore by good consequence, it is also lawful to kill in defence of our honour.

To this their seeming invincible *Goliath* to defend their ill cause, I answer that the disorderly love of this falsely esteemed honour above the esteem and love of our lives, which God hath given us to preserve, cannot authorize our killing, or being killed, to preserve it: but rather it is to be truly esteemed (as it is) a great error, and impiety, to esteem that false honour above our life: and a most deceitful folly, to think, that for maintaining this imaginary false honour, only grounded upon the fancy of humane conceit, that it should be lawful to accept a duel, contrary to the expresse prohibition, and most just laws of all Christian Common-wealths;  
against

against the holy Cannons of the Catholick Church, and so expressly against the Commandment of God.

O but so long as he lives (saith the Duellist) who hath given me the lie, or a box on the ear; so long shall I live without honour and contempt amongst men.

I answer, that this their conceived honour, is but that wherewith the spirit of pride possesseth his deluded children of this world, which is quite contrary to that of the spirit of God; which according to true vertuous charity, doth imitate the patience and mildnesse of Jesus Christ, who forbids us all revenge, which is the proper office of God. To conclude, we know right well, that sooner or later we must from our heart forgive all injuries, if we intend to be saved; and wherefore then defer we the same? we but greatly encreasing our sin thereby, and Gods heavy offence, we lose much merit, and put our selves in great danger to die impenitent, and by that means to perish for ever.

You have here seen the exercise of Divine Charity in loving our Enemies, which is its hardest task, and hath great need to be helped by the holy practise of mortification; that so necessary an instrument rightly to comply therein with our duty to Gods holy command in this great vertue, as well, as in all the rest, according as I said before in its proper place: but because obedience is the original root from whence that vertue of Mortification springs, I must not omit to afford it a place in this present Rule:

**Rule:** that by rightly understanding both the nature, and blessed effects thereof, we may be the more moved to the practise

*Of the holy Vertue of Obedience.*

**T**Rue Christian Obedience, is a vertue, whereby we submit our will to the just command of our lawful superiors, wherein no sin, nor Gods offence doth manifestly appear; and in regard of their being our superiors so appointed by God, we yield them obedience, as to himself with all willing promptitude, and alacrity.

We need not seek for other examples to authorise Gods high esteem of this holy Vertue, than what the Saint of Saints, Jesus Christ himself hath given us by his submission and obedience to his eternal Fathers will; whose whole life was but a continual sacrifice of a most perfectly accomplished obedience, even to a reproachful death upon the Crosse. By the submission to his poor Parents for thirty years  
 Phil. 2.8 space, as S. Luke declares to us. Nor, refused  
 Luk. 2.51 he to obey to the cruel sentence of his unjust and sacrilegious Judges; nor to give way to those enraged Executioners of the same, he did not shew the least reluctance in yielding to that his eternal Fathers decree, and yet now also daily, doth he not still punctually obey to those operatory sacred words of Consecration duly proffer'd by the Priest; though otherwise he be never so unworthy a man? But to  
 make

make no long recital of all those unspeakable indignities of buffetings, and foul spittings upon his Divine face; of those innumerable cruel stripes at the Pillar, whereby from the Crown of the head to the sole of his foot they left no whole place remaining; as also of that cruel crowning with sharp thorns, with all the other scorns, mockeries, and shameful confusions; to all which he most patiently obeyed, in all willing submission unto his Heavenly Fathers decree. It shall suffice but to mention what the Prophet *Esay* adds: *I have given my bodie to the strikers, and my cheeks to the pluckers: I have not turned away my face from the rebukers and spitters.* You see here no refusal he made at all to obey: Hath our obedience now any true resemblance to that of this our Divine Master, our example, and model whom we ought to imitate? is our obedience without reluctance, or any reply? without murmuring, or any complaint? or much rather is it not with much contradiction, replies, and long delays, with repugnance and contrary sense? and in such sort, that to get us to obey, all must be easie which is commanded, and suitable to our own humour; and that also with tearms of respect, and by well pleasing persons, whom we love and esteem: all which being compared with the specified obedience of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ: O what difference, or rather how little resemblance shall we find?

*Esay 50*

IF



If here the vertuous soul desire to be informed how she may best acquire this holy vertue of perfect obedience; I know no means more pregnant and important for that end, than to obey our lawful Superiors; as if it were God himself: for upon the Chair of Moses have sitten the Scribes and Pharisees; all things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe ye, and obey: so that what we are principally to regard in this vertue of Christian obedience, is God and his divine pleasure; which be it manifested to me by a lawful proposer, and due authority; that sufficeth me to obey without personal exception to the superior, whom (as in the place of God) I ought to obey.

And for this respect it is generally agreed upon by spiritual men; that our obedience to a superior, ought not to be out of respect that we see it both just and prudently commanded by him; nor because he is a right vertuous man; nor for any other gift whatsoever which may excell in him: but meerly, and in respect that he beareth the place and authority of God himself. For if you leave this holy respect and motive, and obey but out of some other humane reason or regard, the force of the true vertue of Obedience is lost: neither is it then properly the Christian vertue of Obedience, nor an act of Religion; because that out of the dictamen of reason it self, without all other relation unto any vertue at all, you would follow the advise of a learned, prudent, and well experienced man, which makes it a moral vertue, but not a divine; and is an obedience

and submission unto man, but not to God. Whereas the true and perfect Christian obedience is quite contrary; it being in true respect only to God himself, although it be by a mans or in a man, unto God, and purely for his sake only, obeying his Superior appointed by him; and therefore obeyed for his sake, as readily and willingly, as though the person appointed be never so mean, simple, or unworthy (so long as his command doth not apparently contradict Gods own command, and apparent honour) yea, and by how much this Superior (Gods substitute) is the more unworthy in himself, the greater is the vertue of obedience, and love shewed therein, even unto God himself; for whose only love and command I obey so mean an Officer of his, put by him in charge to be over me, and to represent the place of God himself. Like as it would be laudable in a Soldier, under an unworthy Officer; or Servant under an unworthy Steward; yet appointed by the Lord or General with that authority to command, and that those inferiors should punctually obey him.

This was the consideration so well pondered by Saint Francis, as it caused him to say, that he should be as ready to obey the least person, who had been a novice but one hour in the order (if he were appointed for his Guardian) as to a religious, most prudent, and of the most ancient standing. He rightly understood the true nature of perfect obedience, and therefore he little regarded the quality of the Superiors person, but God himself, to whom in his Superior he

he gave his prompt obedience, and humble respect; well knowing by how much the Superior was lesse qualified with worth, and least deserving of authority; so much the more was thereby our Obedience, for Gods sake promptly given unto him; the perfecter, and much more acceptable to God himself; as being more purely for the love which we bear unto him, than it would be if it were to a person of great merit & desert in himself, for which we should be moved most readily to obey, yea, although we had no such command at all from God; as of those Disciples of *Cato*, of *Socrates*, and of the other so much renouned Philosophers, we may well believe, that their great renown and learning was the motive of their Disciples, both believing, and obeying the Precepts which they gave them. But Christian obedience to true superiors, regards not the quality of the person, but purely God, whose place he represents, and for whose sake he respects and honours him; and out of that motive he obeys, and is the true formal cause of Christian obedience: for as one refuseth not to reverence, and respect a Crucifix; because it is of wood, brasse, or baser metal; and not of Gold, or Silver: so neither ought we to neglect a Superior although he be but of mean parts; it being God, whom we respect in him, and yield our obedience.

To this purpose it is not improper what is recorded of a King of *Ægypt*, who being raised from a very mean Parentage, therefore his subjects began to contemn him, to murmur, and

much

much to detract from him; which he perceiving, did wisely cause a golden Basen (which formerly he used for washing his feet before his meals) to be melted into the form of a God; and proposed the same to them for to adore; which they willingly admitting; thereupon he plainly told the people of what matter he had made that God, which, notwithstanding they so willingly adored for a Deity. And therefore he told them that they ought not to think much now to honour him as their King, they having chosen, and made him for such, though out of a base and mean descent: whereupon all remained both content, and greatly applauded his reason for the same.

By this, and what else hath been already said, it now sufficiently is made manifest, that no act of obedience can be meritorious towards Heaven, as a supernatural or Christian Vertue; unlesse it be animated, and informed with the motive and true intention of purely obeying God, which is the formal reason of supernatural and Christian obedience; and without which our obedience may well be a rational, natural, or a moral vertue; but supernatural, divine, or a Christian Vertue it cannot be, if that it want the Spirit and true motive of obeying, for the love of God, and out of due submission to his divine will: which holy motive renders our obedience so very grateful to God, and so exceeding advantageous to our own souls; as it makes the exercise of other vertues also to be but easie and very pleasing. And therefore S. Thomas had good reason, when of

*S. Tho. 2. 2. ques. 68. art. 8.* the three religious vows, he doubts not to prefer obedience to the other two; because (saith he) by the vow of Poverty, we give to God our wealth: and by the vow of Chastity, our bodie: but by the vow of Obedience, we give to him our own will and judgment, that best part of our soul, which is far more than all the rest most dear to us, and hardest to be parted withal; as great *S. Gregory* did well conceive, telling us that obedience is preferred by God before sacrifice; because that in sacrifice we offer to him not our own flesh, but that which belongs unto other Creatures; whereas by obedience we offer to him our own, as also that which is of all the rest most dear to us, our will, which being entirely, and with cheerful promptitude sacrificed unto God, any vice will be easily thereby subdued, and the practise of vertue made easie; which gave *S. Augustine* much reason to call Obedience, *the Mother, the Spring and fountain of all vertues.* And *S. Greg.* had no lesse to extoll the same; telling us that Obedience is the only vertue, which begets all other vertues in our souls, and there both plants and preserves them. To this very effect the ancient Fathers declare that holy Proverb 21. 28. *the obedient man recompts victories,* for by this true obedience, he conquereth the greatest vice: amongst which self-will, and stiffness in our own judgment, is of all spiritual maladies the greatest and most dangerous; for that it is an obstacle, and will neither acknowledge nor understand its own danger; whereas submission by holy obedience to Gods Law, & to a rightful Superior,

2. Reg.  
15. 22.

*Lib. 1.  
con. ad-  
vers. leg.  
& proph.  
c. 14.*

*Li. 5. mo-  
ral. c. 10.*



Superior, substitute in his own place, that would easily prevent our harm, and cure also that dangerous disease.

This one reflexion more I must not omit, it being a thing in its own nature most evident, and a first principal in moral Philosophy; that no man can be a fit judge of himself, nor in his own proper cause, by reason of passion and self-love, which wholly blinds us: like as the object which is laid upon the eyes, is too near to be perceived by the sight. It is the very like with our spiritual sight; we are over near to our selves to behold, and to know rightly our own cause; we are too much conjoined by self-love to discern aright, or to judge in our own behalf: and therefore it is very unreasonable that we should relie, or stand to our own judgment therein; but rather to our lawful judge, which is Gods holy law, or to a rightful Superior, and the true substitute in his place, in whom we yield our obedience most truly unto God himself; for this is a most just and true Christian Rule.

I have now proposed to you the practise of such vertues as I conceive most necessary for a vertuous soul aspiring to perfection. I know some may expect I should have spoke of many more; yet these containing the active part of that Christian duty to which we are chiefly obliged; I thought it sufficient to comply with this my design of a practical Rule; and therefore in consequence of this holy Vertue of obedience, I will in the next place now speak of keeping the commanded Fasts, and Festival



daies; two Precepts of holy Church, to the due observation whereof, obedience doth oblige us under grievous sin.

## The second Part of This fifth R U L E

*Shewing what is required of us, to comply with our Obedience, and Obligation in observing the Fasts and Feasts commanded by the holy Church.*

**M**Y chief intention in composing these Christian Rules, being to propose to the vertuous Soul such points as are most requisite for her practise in that great work, and *the only thing necessary*, so seriously recommended to St. Martha by Jesus Christ himself, mean of working her salvation; I could not omit to speak of these two precepts so mainly conducing to that blessed end. Fasting being the proper remedy against the great capital vice of gluttony; that very source of surfeiting, of drunkenness, and of all beastiality. And by rightly observing the Sabbath and other holy daies, our souls are nourished with Prayer and vertuous practises, whereby we get strength again

Luke 10.  
42:

against all the fierce assaults of our Ghostly Enemies, when chiefly employed upon the other dayes about our temporal affairs, we are most subject then to danger, and strongest temptations.

But now to treat of these two precepts in due order, fasting must have the first place; it being a preparation, and very properlie disposeth our souls to the right and profitable observation of the other: this holy Fast and abstinence having ever been the general practise of all Gods greatest Saints, as the main expedient to dispose their souls to Heavenly contemplation, and to be made thereby more capable of Gods divine Grace and favours; as will hereafter more particularly appear by the reasons which moved our careful Mother the Catholick Church to institute these fasting days upon the Eves, or Vigils of all such great solemn Feasts, which are to be most devoutly observed. And for the better comprehending what now is meant by this holy Fast: you must here observe, that there be three several sorts of Fasts: the Natural, the Ecclesiastical, and the Spiritual, or Metaphorical Fast.

The Natural Fast consists in the abstinence from all gustable things, be it Meat, Drink, or any Physical portion whatsoever, which can justly be conceived to have descended into the stomach. And this Fast (for more reverence sake) is required for the holy Communion, from midnight before the day of receiving it, unless extremity of sicknesse allow it to be taken for our *matricam.*

The Ecclesiastical Fast, is a voluntary abstinence from all Flesh, Eggs, and Whitemeat, according to order of Holy Church, or received custom of the place. And as for the quantity, but one meal a day is allowed, with a collation at night of Bread and Fruit, and that also but so sparingly, as it may more properlie serve for preventing harm to our health, than for the nourishment of our body. And although drinking breaketh not this Fast (it chiefly serving but to convey, and distribute the nourishment of our meat to the several parts of our body, and to refresh the blood) yet by excessse therein, the sin of intemperance is frequently committed.

Fasting also, though properly it be an abstaining from certain corporal Food (and that according to the order of holy Church) yet by a metaphor, it is also used for true abstinence from sin; which is the Spiritual, or Metaphorical Fast; and which the Libertin Sectaries of our time will have only to oblige us to be observed: decrying the other, as superstitious, for believing our selves obliged to that heavy yoke (as they call it) of the Law: from which (as they falsely pretend) Christ by the liberty of their new Gospel hath freely delivered them.

But this their bad pretence doth no more free them from the obligation of obeying their lawful Pastors command of Fasting, than it doth from obeying the just Laws of their temporall and sovereign Prince: and therefore as the pleading of such a Prerogative to the liberty of their Gospel, would not exempt them from the due punishment of audacious rebellion against their

their temporal Lord; so neither doth it exempt  
 them from being declared by Iesus Christ to be  
 guilty of a far greater crime and punishment for  
 their irreligious rebellion to the command of his  
 holy Spouse the Church: which being governed Math. 18.  
 in all things by his own holy Spirit, he will have  
 us both to hear, and to obey it as himself: nor Luke 10.  
*shall we have God for our Father, unless we have  
 the holy Church for our Mother;* as both S. Cyprian  
 and S. Aug. do assure us. And therefore this her  
 command of the Ecclesiastical fast is not to be  
 neglected; which she ordains but as the means  
 and help for the better observance of the other  
 spiritual Fast; without which, to observe the  
 former, it would little avail us; as wanting its  
 perfection; and truest accomplishment, which  
 makes it both grateful to God, and very profit-  
 able to our own souls; supposing it be regula-  
 ted by the true Rule of Prudence and Vertue,  
 which require these following conditions.

First, that it be, according to the Apostle, Rom. 12.  
*reasonable:* that is, discreet, and without any  
 notable prejudice to our bodily health; but ra-  
 ther destroying vice, than our body. For some-  
 times it hapneth, that by transport of some sud-  
 den fervor in Devotion, one may be carried un-  
 to over violent exercise of penance, beyond the  
 strength of nature: but such must permit them-  
 selves to be entirely ruled by the advice of a pru-  
 dent spiritual Director; and by no means be their  
 own guide therein.

Secondly, our Fast must be very sober and frugal;  
 not riotous, nor with such excess of costly  
 and delicate dishes, as that it may seem to equal,

or exceed our best furnished tables at other times; for that might be justly esteemed but an exchanging the former dainties of the Land, for those much more costly (perhaps) of the water: which truly is in effect but to delude, and much rather to make a verie mockerie of our Fast, than to comply with the holy end and institution thereof. And whereas we are advised by S. Gregory, S. Ambrose, and others to feed the poor with what we spared by fasting, (without which our fasting would be but an effect of avarice) we by this riotous excess do spend much more, than we should have done without such a Fast. And moreover the soul, which, by bodily abstinence should also have been enabled, and made much more vigorous for Prayer, and all other spiritual good exercises of vertue; is now rather by too much repletion, is made far lesse apt for them both: and though we sin not by any formal breach of the Fast; yet we sin by breaking the rule of temperance, and offend God greatly thereby: yea, they are much deceived (saith S. Aug.) who so deprive themselves of flesh in time of Fast, as to procure other food instead thereof, which is both more costly, and curious in the seasoning; for this would not be truly abstinence; but rather to change our greediness to a greater excess.

*Serm. 77.* thus S. Aug. Such delicate full feeders, ob-  
*de divers.* serving but the outward form of the Fast, comply not with the holy end thereof, which is, as the Lenten Preface tells us, to suppress vice, to elevate the mind unto Heavenly contemplation; and to obtain thereby of God both Grace and reward. But who with delicate and full feed keep

nature



nature pampered as before, their passions as strongly maintained, and their expence so excessive, as nothing is spared for the Poor; what proportion can such fasting have to the true end of holie Fast? nor are we to wonder that a soul taking thus disorderly this spiritual Physick of Fasting, shall find so small a remedy for her sinful diseases, the bad usage thereof, causing more harm than it can do good.

Thirdly, our Fast must be chearful, and with a willing heart, for God loveth a chearful giver, 2 Cor. 9. and condemns those Hypocrites of the Gospel who disfigured their faces, that they might appear great fasters before Men. Math. 6.

It must be holy also, and Religious; that is, not wholly consisting in our abstinence from certain corporal food; but also (and that principally) in our abstaining from sin, from our unruly passions, from disorderly affections, and from all such vicious habits whereby we were accustomed to offend Almighty God; for by this blessed Fast we gain that happie hunger and thirst after true Justice and Grace, whereby we shall be filled with that spiritual joy, and Heavenly food which will nourish us to Eternity.

Finally, would you have your Fasting to be grateful to God, add to it the two helping wings, of *Alms*, and *Prayer*, for they will raise it to Heaven, and there present it before Gods Heavenly Throne. Tob. 12.

You have seen now here briefly the chief conditions required for holie Fast: which if you find something repugnant to corrupt sensuality, and the



and the inferior part; yet take but this east of the most happie fruit thereof, and it will make both reason and the inferior portion to embrace it with much content.

The first good fruit to be gathered from holy Fast (by such who are not lawfully exempt) is corporal health, by consuming and drying up those superfluous humours which both beget diseases, and much oppress nature; and therefore it prolongeth life, as experience doth clearly make manifest in those holy Eremites, *S. Paul*, *St. Anthony*, *St. Hilarion*, *St. Hierome*, *St. Romwald*, and so many other abstemious Saints of ancient times; yea since the coming of our Divine Redeemer into this world, it is to be observed, that commonly the greatest Fasters have been the longest livers. *Simeon Stylites*, (that prodigious Saint, both for his abstinence and austerity) lived 109 years, *S. Arsenius*, *S. Sampson Bishop*, *S. John Abbat*, and *S. Alferius Ab.* all persons of great abstinence, and severity of life, yet lived they, each one at least to the age of fix score years; *S. Maclou Bishop*, in great abstinence and mortification lived a hundred and thirty years: and from this abstinence and sobriety it was that most of these Saines, and very many more, who might be named, continued in much health and vigour, and this without pretence of any miracle; it being but very general, that the greatest fasters, were usually the longest livers; unlesse by some other extraordinary austerities, nature happened to be much sooner consumed in them, than it would have been by their fasting.

Not

Nor ought we to find much difficulty to believe, that holy fast prolongeth life; it being eternal wisdom who so expressly avoucheth; that, *he Ecclef. who is abstinent shall add to life.* 37.

2ly. And which is to be esteemed a benefit incomparably surpassing the other, by holy fast all fleshly temptations are weakened, yea many even extinguished, and prevented also oftentimes from being so much as kindled in our corrupt sensuality: for natural reason it self most clearly convinceth; that being our rebellious sensual motions do principally proceed from superfluity of nourishment; they must needs be much mitigated by fasting, which both cooleth, and dryeth up those abounding humors, which serve but as true fuel to encrease that sensual concupiscence, which Gods Saints have so gloriously subdued by the help of holy abstinence and fast. *I humbled my soul by fasting,* saith the Kingly Prophet, for the flesh is rebellious to the spirit, and therefore to be subdued and humbled, that the spirit may prevail; as *S. Paul* assures us of this undoubted truth, both by his word and practise. *Psal. 34.*

3ly. It sharpens and much enables all the chief powers, both of our bodie and mind; it also clears the understanding, and renders it much apter for the exercise of its chiefest functions, and by consuming and drying up the superfluous humors both of our stomack and head; it is called by *S. Athanasius*, and *S. Basil* the very Mother of health: yea, by fasting the understanding is far better disposed, as well for studie, as Prayer; and by that greater purity, both *I Cor. 9.*

both of bodie and mind, the soul becomes much more susceptible of all spiritual comfort, and of divine illuminations from God.

By all which Heavenly and happy effects, you have now finally the tast which I promised to give you of the wholesome fruit of true Catholick Fast; which being but well considered, had not our most tenderly loving Mother, the Holy Church, great reason to use her strongest power, not only by earnest exhortation to recommend very carefully this so useful and necessary a remedy unto her children; but also for more security, to oblige them by special precept and command to make use of it in all fitting occasions? And hereupon she was moved for our greater good to institute those certain times of Holy Fast, which we see to be now so generally observed throughout the whole Christian world.

*Of the general Fasts of the Church, upon what time and daies they are appointed; and wherefore.*

**A**LL true Catholicks observe generally the Fast of *Lent*, the four *Ember* week daies, and the *Vigils* or Eves of divers principal Feasts of the year: as also abstinence upon Fridaies, Saturdaies, and Rogation daies: which partly introduced by Apostolical tradition; and partly by custom, for some pious end, were commanded

ded afterwards to be generally observed by the whole Catholick Church.

And first for the solemn Fast of *Lent*, it hath been ever a most constant practise throughout the universal Church; following herein the practise of Jesus Christ, who sanctified this Fast for our example. In grateful memory, and in imitation whereof, the Apostles themselves did both institute, and most religiously observe this holy Fast of *Lent*, as S. *Hierome* assures us; and upon S. *Matthew*, he declares the very time which they ordained for this Fast: to wit, the 40 daies immediately before that bitter death and Passion, and glorious Resurrection of our Redeemer Jesus Christ: that by fasting and chastising the flesh, we might be better disposed to celebrate those sacred mysteries; and to preserve thereby a grateful memory of this consecrated Fast by the Son of God; not for any need he had thereof, but meerly for our instruction; and to shew the force it hath, and how requisite for our help to overcome the temptations of our ghostly Enemies: whereof some are not to be conquered but *only by fasting and prayer*. And for this very reason, the Apostles following the holy example of their Divine Master; they both instituted, and also practised this holy Fast of *Lent*, which hath been ever most religiously observed by our loving Mother the Church; as is most evidently convinced by the writings of the ancient Fathers, and Doctors throughout all ages, even until our present time: which is I hope abundantly sufficient to authorize this holy Fast, sanctified

Ep. 54.  
ad Mar-  
cel.

Math.  
17.

fied by the example of Jesus Christ, instituted  
 by the ordinance of the Apostles, and delivered  
 to us by a perpetual tradition, and com-  
 mandment of the Church: By which all Chri-  
 stians are obliged to fast all the daies of Lent,  
 except Sundaies only, abstaining from flesh,  
 eggs, and cheese, unlesse for a lawful cause one  
 be dispensed therewith. Also in many places  
 both butter and milk are forbid, without per-  
 mission: This Fast also permits but one meal a  
 day, with a very moderate collation at night.  
 It is to be noted, that there are three general  
 causes which excuse from fasting: first the age,  
 till 21 years accomplisht, and 60 years now  
 also past. 2ly. Infirmitie; as also women with  
 child, Nurses, and such sicknesse and indi-  
 sposition, which are not able to endure fasting.  
 3ly. All such whose profession, and necessary  
 exercise is very laborious, and painful, all  
 these are exempt from fasting, and it belongs to  
 the Curate and Physician to judge of the cause.  
 And such as are dispensed withal, ought to do  
 some other good work, or Penance instead of  
 their not fasting. These premisses but well con-  
 sidered, may sufficiently perswade us to a very  
 willing and cheerful observance of this holy  
 precept of the Church, thus strongly grounded  
 upon so good authority, and convincing  
 motives for its institution; as will also yet far-  
 ther appear, by this which follows.

Of the *Ember Dayes*: by whom, and wherefore they were first instituted.

**T**He Blessed Apostles themselves first ordained *Serm. 8.*  
 these *Ember Dayes* of Fast, as *S. Leo the de Fejun.*  
 Great doth assure us. Though *Calixtus*, that  
 holy Pope and Martyr *Anno 226.* by decree  
 commanded them (for very congruous reasons)  
 to be kept at those four seasons of the Year.  
 First, for to moderate the four several humors  
 of our body at their each predominant season,  
 to wit, choler in Summer, Melancholy in the  
 Autumn, Flegm in Winter, And Blood in the  
 Spring.

2ly. To pray for the Fruits of the Earth. In  
 the Spring, when they are sown, and begin first  
 to grow. In Summer, that they may come to  
 due maturity. In Autumn, for a seasonable  
 Harvest to reap, and to lay them in. And fi-  
 nally in Winter, that we may use them tempe-  
 rately, and without offending God.

3ly. Because as each quarter of the Year con-  
 taineth 3 whole months: so by appointing to each  
 quarter, these three days of Fast; we give unto  
 God thereby one day of each month in the Year,  
 as the first Fruits which are most due to him.  
*Wednesday* is one of these days ordained for this  
 Fast: because upon that day the Scribes and  
 Pharisees did meet in Council, and there resol-  
 ved to put Jesus to death. On *Friday* we fast,  
 in memory of the cruel execution of that their  
 sacrilegious rage. And finally on *Saturday* we  
 also



also fast in memory of the blessed Virgin and Apostles exceeding great sorrow and grief during our Saviours lying buried in the Grave; till Sunday morning, that by his most glorious Resurrection, he likewise raised their sad hearts to new joy. And by these two days abstinence, our minds are also much better prepared to sanctifie the Sunday following as we ought.

Finally, we fast and pray upon Ember dayes, thereby to invoke the Grace of the Holy Ghost for all such as are in those times to take sacred orders in the Church; that such only may be admitted unto that Divine Function, as shall be to Gods glory, for the good of souls, and for the edification of his dear Spouse the Holie Catholick Church; by the promotion of such worthy Persons only, whose just merit may make them deserving of that sacred ministry; and to be chosen fit Pastors, and Prelates for that high and dreadful dignitie, to have the charge and government of our souls.

### *Of our Fasting upon Vigils and Eves.*

**Y**OU have now seen that the institution both of the Fast of Lent, and Ember days was not without a very Pious and profitable end: the next is to shew both the cause and motive wherefore the Eves or Vigils were also appointed to be observed Fasts.

For which it is to be noted, that they were first ordained in imitation of our blessed Saviour his frequent night watchings in Prayer: as we may read

read in *S. Luke*, and manie other places of the Gospel; and as the verie word it self, *vigilia*, or *vigil*, (signifying an abstaining from sleep, or watching by night) doth plainly manifest. Which manner of watching was used, by dividing the night into four equal parts; whence cometh, the *first*, *second*, *third*, and *fourth watch*, (whereof we so often read) and therefore the Church, not improperly, hath applied this word *vigilia*, or *vigil* to signifie the Eve, or Evening before any solemn Feast; which the first holy Christians observed by their night watching and Prayer, but afterwards it was changed to this manner as we now observe the Vigil, for this reason following; as likewise for a better preparation against the ensuing Feast, in disposing our minds thereby more fittingly to celebrate the same.

But afterwards by length of time, and great increase of Christianity; and chressly by decay of that first primitive holie Spirit amongst the Christians, manie great abuses were committed by those night meetings in the Church: and instead of Prayer, and Pietie, the ruder and leboister sort, did make but gamesom sports, and juncatings: whereof *S. Ambrose* being advertised by devout *S. Monica*, he caused thereupon those Vigils, or night watchings, to be changed into Fasting daies; thereby the better to prepare both our hearts and minds to Holy Prayer, and Purity, for the more worthie celebrating of the ensuing Feast, which custom the Church hath both approved, and practised ever since.

## Of the Rogation-daies : and Processions.

**T**He Rogation Daies are so called; because upon those Days the Church hath ordained, that in publick Processions we sing the *Letanies*; which *Letanies* (a Greek word) doth signifie the same as *Rogation*, or solemn supplication doth in Latin. This devotion of the *Letanies*, or *Rogation*, is a verie antient custom in the Church, as *S. Basil* witnesseth. And in the time of *S. Greg. Thaumaturgus*, about the Year 240 that Devotion was in use: though afterwards renewed (and with Fasting and Procession adjoyned to the *Letanies*) they were more solemnly practised by *S. Martin*, Bishop of *Vienna* in *France*, about the Year 452. he commanding those afflicted People to joyn repentant hearts and fervent Prayers with the intercession of all the blessed Saints, to crave Gods mercie, and to free them from that great punishment of their sins, by most horrid Earthquakes, and by Wolves, and other ravenous Beasts, which came by flocks into their Towns, and devoured many of the People. These Rogation daies appointed to be upon the three daies immediatly before the Ascension of our Lord, are called the *lesse Rogation*; because it was ordained in a lesser, and much meaner place; as also by a much inferior Prelate, than is the Rogation upon the day of *S. Mark*, which was appointed by *S. Gregory the Great*, and in the most famous City of *Rome*.

Epist. 63.

upon

upon the apparition of an Angel on the top of  
Moles. Adrian (for that occasion now ever since  
called, *Castel Angelo*) there sheathing his sword,  
in testimonie that Gods angry wrath was appea-  
red, which immediately before stood dead to mar-  
ring thousands suddenly, as they were sneezing,  
or yawning. From whence began the custom,  
that so soon as any was heard to sneeze, all then  
who were near, run presently to kiss him, say-  
ing, *God bless you*, or *God bless you*, as ever since  
the custom hath continued, when any sneezes,  
to say, *God bless you*, and also to make the  
sign of the Cross upon our mouths in yawning,  
as they then also did.

This Devotion of the Litanies, with process-  
ion and abstinence, first instituted upon the  
occasions, as you have heard, was recom-  
mended and commanded also afterward by the holie  
Church, to be generallie observed by all bee-  
nighful Children, for other good ends and mu-  
lty uses: those daies falling out about the vernal  
season that Annies are then usually preparing  
for the field. The Thunder and Lightning is  
then also most frequent, which like Gods fiery  
Darts, flie, threatening us over our heads. The  
fruits of the Earth are then generally in their  
tender growth, and therefore verie subject by  
many several casualties to take much harme.  
Finally, it is the time that both Men, and  
beasts are verie subject to sickness, and mortu-  
alitie: all which being but the lamentable ef-  
fects in due punishment of our sin, therefore  
our Pious and careful Mother the Catholick  
Church, grounded upon the self same judge-  
ment

Or

ment with S. Paul, reprehending the Corinthi-  
ans of his time for provoking God to anger by  
their irreverences in the Church, and unwor-  
thy communicating the body and Blood of our  
Lord with other irreverences, for which he  
there declares that God severely punisheth very  
many of them with several sorts of diseases, and  
with death it self, in punishment of their  
small respect and reverence wherewith they re-  
ceived this Divine & Holie Sacrament: therefore

1 Cor 11. are there amongst you, many weak, and feeble (saith  
the Apostle) and many sleep, the sleep of death  
he means: by which we see how fearful a sin it  
is to receive the most sacred and pure body of  
our Lord with a defiled conscience, and not  
carefully by confession and repentance well pu-  
rified from all mortal sin; seeing God strook  
many to death for it in the Primitive Church,  
and punished others by several sorts of very  
grievous infirmities: and therefore what marvel  
that so many strange Diseases, with Famine,  
War, and other mischiefs, and just punishments  
of God should fall upon us now in this our most  
perverse and wicked age.

But to return to our former matter, if the  
cavelling Sectary shall demand upon what au-  
thority our manner of Processions are ground-  
ed: I answer, that upon the example and law-  
ful model which God himself did give to Josue  
Jof. c. 6. commanding him and the Israelites to make  
seven turns about the Walls of Jerico, the  
Bricks sounding their Trumpets, carrying the  
Ark of alliance in the middle of them; which  
is the true figure of our Processions in the Co-  
tholick



Catholick Church: wherein the Hymns and Be-  
 nedic- tions are sung, and the holy Eucharist (that  
 true Ark of Alliance) is carried with Prayers,  
 and invocation, to obtain Gods grace and mer-  
 cy; with victory over sin, our greatest Enemy.  
 We also read in Euseb. in *Hi-  
 story* lib. 8. and in  
 Baron. that so soon as the Council of Nice was  
 ended, and the City of *Constantinople* built,  
 Constantine the great did make a solemn Proce-  
 sion round about the walls of the City with  
 hymns, Prayers, and banners of the holy  
 Crosse. The like did *Arcadius* the Emperour, S.  
*John Chrysostome*, and many others: which shew  
 sufficiently the ancient practise of making Pro-  
 cessions in the Church.  
 Now the end of making these Processions, are  
 to honour God, to crave his blessings, to  
 give thanks for his benefits, and to appease his  
 wrath. The Crosse, or Crucifix carried before  
 us, represent our Captain and glorious Re-  
 deemer Jesus Christ, carrying his hea-  
 vy Crosse from *Pilates* Court, unto *Mount Calvary*, where  
 he then was crucified for our salvation: and  
 therefore the holy Crosse being the true stand-  
 ard of this our divine Captain, we must fol-  
 low it with great devotion, and fight faithfull-  
 y under the same, against our mortal and ghostly  
 Enemies; representing our selves but as  
 poor Pilgrims following this our heavenly guide  
 in faithful service, and imitation of his blessed  
 virtues; and in true homage of all the labori-  
 ous steps which he made for us in this mortal  
 life. And

Lib. i. vi.  
 de Const.  
 47. item.  
 annal.  
 Esd.



And therefore, I say, the holy Church hath great cause to command this devotion upon Rogation daies, by Prayer, Abstinence, and Processions; thereby to stir up her Children to Penance, and to cry for mercy in time; and by those Litanies to crave the intercession of all the blessed Saints and Angels unto God for us; which being the end and only motive of her ordaining these Rogation daies; and withal considering both the venerable antiquity, of above thirteen hundred years, since in the time of Constantine the great (that greatest honour of our English Nation, and first Christian Emperor, that establish Christianiey in the world) that devotion of holy Processions was then practised, as now it is: Which being also confirmed by so great authority, as we have already seen; it might well suffice to stop our modern Seditaries from their inveying, without all reason, against this so holy and devout Custom.

On all Sundales, in the Parish is made Procession (that is to say a walking Devotion) in honour of Christs Resurrection, as going to find him with S. Mary Magdalen, and the rest, sometimes in the morning at the holy Sepulchre, and to follow him with the Apostles into Galilee, by a new and holy life.

You have seen our obligation to obey this just Command of Fast, and Abstinence; as also the many convincing Motives to induce us thereunto, for our own great corporal, and spiritual benefit. Yet for that our love unto Flesh and Bloud is so tenderly feeling, even

but of conceited prejudice, to our bodily health; as that upon the least pretence, this wholesome Fast must be neglected, which notwithstanding is the true food of Vertue, and the most needful nourishment to the Soul: For this reason, I thought it not unfitting, here briefly to recompt to you out of *Nicephorus*, what happened above eleven hundred years ago, and doth well manifest the religious and great veneration wherewith the zealous Christians of those more happy times, observed the holy Fasts.

Lib. 17.  
c. 31.

In the time of *Justinian* the Emperor, there was so great a dearth, as he caused the shambles throughout all the City of *Constantinople* to be opened, and Flesh to be freely sold unto all in the second week of *Lent*; yet such was the devotion, and zealous piety of the people towards the observation of that holy Custome, and time; as that there was not one person amongst all that numerous multitude, and several sorts of all conditions of people, who would make use of that free, and lawful dispensation; so much as once but to tast of the least bit of flesh during the whole time of *Lent*; although so greatly pressed unto it, by such an urgent necessity.

O how far is now our carnal and sensual age from this great vertue, & most laudable Christian temperance! we now are glad of any pretended, yea, even of a but half seeming cause, to presse and importune for many needlesse dispensations; wherein, neither the spiritual, nor yet the corporal Physician can well find any sufficient probability, to warrant giving li-

cence to those froward and stubborn children of the Church ; who oftentimes (though to their own prejudice, both of their corporal and spiritual health) would never be quiet, nor pleased, but by gaining their own froward will ; which is so very nice, as it cannot endure the least Mortification of their sensual and unruly appetite, neither for the love of God, nor for the satisfaction of their innumerable, and most grievous sins.

But the sensual Sectaries, and great Enemies to holy Fast, will tell you, that Jesus Christ himself assures us, *that not what entreteth into the mouth defileth man ;* and therefore our fasting is but in vain.

If this be so understood, I would then know of them how they can make drunkenness a sin ; and from whence was it that our first unhappy Parents were so fowly defiled, and all their posterity in them, by their only eating of that forbidden fruit in *Paradise* ? They say it was the transgressing of Gods Command to them, which made their eating to be sinful. And we also say the very same in all transgressions of Holy Fast : for it is not what entreteth by the mouth, but the disobedience to the Church (which Jesus Christ commands us to obey) that makes the sin ; nor is the Creature, which is eaten, worse in it self, one day, than it is another ; but only our action is made sinful by our disobedience unto our holy Mother the Catholick Church, against our blessed Saviour his so expresse a command (and that under so severe a

Mar. 18, curse and punishment) to obey.

But

But this discourse intending only instruction and exhortation to the true humble and obedient child of the Church, and not disputation with the libertine despisers of what may be a curb unto their sensuality: I will conclude, exhorting you to to imitate his divine Charity, in offering up your hearty prayers for the conversion of those obstinate Contemners of the obliging orders of his beloved Spouse, who vouchsafed to pray for them who were the sacrilegious Executioners of that most bitter death which he suffered upon the Crosse for the salvation of us all.

These Despisers of holy Fast, are no lesse rebellious to God and his holy Spouse, in violating & contemning also the observation of appointed Feasts commanded by the Catholick Church. But because to this precedent discourse of Fasting, the holy satisfactory work of Alms, is usually adjoined, therefore I will not separate them; but to the precedent discourse of Fasting, I will here briefly declare the great spiritual benefit which is to be reaped by the holy Exercise

### *Of the Satisfactory work of Alms.*

**P**ayer is good with Fasting and Alms, rather than to lay up Treasures of Gold; because Alms delivereth from death, purgeth sin, and maketh to find mercy and life everlasting, saith Toby. By which we see so well declared, both the excellency, the fruit, and necessity of this great Vertue,

Tob.  
c. II.

- Virtue, as it ought very powerfully to excite us to the practise of the same; which by S.
- Phil. 4. Paul is called, a sweet odour, and a most acceptable
- Tob. 4. Host to God. Yea, it prevents our souls descending into Hell. The reason is given by the holy Ghost himself, who tells us, that as water
- Eccles. 3. quencherh fire; so Alms doth extinguish sin. O how exceeding a comfort will it be to those thrice happy souls, to hear it pronounced in
- Mat. 25. their behalfs at the last dreadful day: Come ye
35. blessed of my Father; possess ye the Kingdom, &c. for I was hungry, and you did feed me: I was dry, and you gave me to drink: I was naked, and you cloathed me, &c. And what a heart-break on the contrary, to those other uncharitable and covetous wretches, to see themselves condemned to the eternally tormenting flames of Hell; who might have purchased at so easie a rate, those happy Keys, which would have also opened unto them the Gates of Paradise: but I was hungry (saith Jesus Christ) and you did not feed me: I was dry, and you gave me not to drink: I was naked, and you did not cloath me, &c. and therefore, go ye cursed into eternal fire, &c. for you refusing it to my own true members, the Poor, you refused to do it to my self. O how happy and truly wise are they, who by right use of their wicked Manimon, make friends with it in time, by relieving the poor! for thereby they put it out at use to God himself with
- Pov. 19. most advantage for their own endlesse felicity.



But some poor man, perchance may reple,  
and demand; how he should either feed the  
hungry, or cloath the naked, who hath not  
wherewithall to supply his own necessities? I  
answer, that who hath not means to relieve his  
Neighbours want; let him have Charity to  
compassionate them, and by prayers and coun-  
sel to assist them the best he can. For there are  
two several sorts of Alms (saith *S. Augustine*)  
whereby our sins are pardoned: and, of them  
all, the best, is to pardon injuries freely from  
our heart; to love our Enemies; to do good  
for evil; and to pray for them who hate us:  
for this is Alms of highest esteem with God,  
whose heavenly grace enables the poor to pra-  
ctise it, as well as it doth the rich. And there-  
fore none must pretend to be exempt from the  
practise of giving Alms, when either corporal-  
ly, or spiritually, or by the exercise of the ho-  
ly works of mercy in either kind, our Neighbours  
necessary comfort, or assistance shall oblige us  
thereunto. Read the fourth chapter of *Toby*,  
where you shall amply see expressed, both the  
effects, the obligation and circumstances of gi-  
ving Alms. To which remitting you, I will stay no  
longer upon this point of Alms, which is not so  
generally obliging, in all respects, as is the fore-  
mentioned precept of holy Church, for obser-  
ving the command in solemnizing her appoin-  
ted Feasts; which yet the Sectaries so much  
neglecting with contempt, they do not observe  
how they by despising therein the holy Church,  
do despise thereby Jesus Christ himself, if they  
believe that Oracle of all divine truth, declaring



Luke 10. to us by the mouth of his Evangelist S. Luke,

16. what credit he will have us to give to his beloved Spouse the Church, saying, *he that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* Which words were never otherways understood by the holy Fathers, and Orthodox Expositors thereof; nor can they be otherwise applyed, but to the holy Church; except that ignorance, or pure malice perversly wrest them to some false, and contrary sense. But how greatly the rebellious Sectaries are blameable herein, and how pernicious Enemies to their own greatest happinesse; this next discourse will sufficiently make manifest, it treating

*Of our Obligation, and manner how we are Religiously to celebrate the Sundays, and other Feasts commanded by the Church: with certain holy exercises, which properly conduce to our better observing the same.*

**B**ESIDES the daily, and preciselie requisite nourishment which necessity requires for entertaining our corporal health and vigor for performance of such duties, as God requires of us; the practise, even amongst the holiest Christians in the Primitive times, allowed some mutual invitations to their little Feasts, called *Agape*,

meets, or charitable Banquets, whereby more  
 facile to establish true love and Charitie a-  
 mongst themselves, and also to relieve the  
 Poor with what was left: So in like manner  
 both God and his holy Church have provided  
 for the spiritual nurture of our souls; that  
 besides the ordinarie, and dailie food for them  
 by Prayer, and other usual exercises of holie  
 vertue, that upon Sundays and other Festival  
 daies, we should feast our souls by more plen-  
 tiful varietie of their true spiritual nourish-  
 ment.

And for this end, it is first to be observed,  
 that we ought to be much more retired, and far  
 more assiduous at our Devotion upon these days,  
 than at other times; the other daies being al-  
 lotted to provide for our corporal necessities, but  
 these are appointed expressely, both by God and  
 his Church, to be employed in his Divine ser-  
 vice; and for the spiritual necessities of our  
 souls; which is the end and motive of their  
 institution; thereby to afford us good leisure,  
 and opportunity to feed upon the grace con-  
 veying Sacraments, which we ought at those  
 times more devoutlie to frequent, according as  
 each ones several disposition may require; and  
 with the advice of a prudent Ghostlie Father.  
 For further direction herein I remit you to  
 blessed Sales, in his introduction to a devout  
 life about confession, and to the Chapter fol-  
 lowing, for frequenting the holy Communi-  
 on.

Part 2.  
 ch: 19.

Wherefore they do not sanctifie the Sabbath  
 day, who spend it in Feasting, sporting, or in  
 vain

meer

meer idle conversation: for the precept  
 teach not, *thou shalt feast and sport the Sabbath  
 day*; but *thou shalt sanctifie the Sabbath day*:  
 that is, by vertuous exercises to make that day  
 more holie than the rest; for it is not the day  
 that sanctifies the works which are done in  
 it; but the works do sanctifie the day, and  
 makes it *holie*. Nor is one day more *holie* than  
 another, but because it is spent in more *holie*  
 and Pious employments. And therefore as  
 vertuous actions do sanctifie the Day; so vici-  
 ous do prophane the same. And hence it is most  
 evident, that God did not forbid the Artificer,  
 or labouring Man their honest and industrious  
 work upon the Sabbath day; to the end he  
 should dance, and sport, or spend that day in  
 sloth or meer idle conversation: no, doubt-  
 lesse he forbid those servil works, (which are  
 good in themselves) to the end we might have  
 leisure to employ the day in spiritual and holie  
 exercises, for his glory, and the greater good  
 of our souls; by frequenting the Sacraments,  
 Sermons, spiritual Lectures, and other devout  
 exercises of vertue; or by exercising the other  
 practises of Christian Pietie, as opportunity  
 permitteth; and according to S. Augustines ad-  
 vice: *let us honour and sanctifie these holy days*;  
 (saith he) *and we being freed then from all  
 servile employments, let us seriously apply our  
 selves to the service of God*; who commanding  
 us to sanctifie the Sabbath day; that is, to em-  
 ploy the same in *holie Prayer*, and actions for  
 his honour, and our Soules good, in some good  
 works of Pietie, and Christian Charitie; as by  
 visiting

visiting some sick, or afflicted person; in rendering him some good office, or charitable advice and exhortation to Patience, and conformity to Gods blessed will: and endeavouring to procure them what comfort and good you can; either for body, or soul; either by your spiritual instruction, or corporal assistance, as their need shall require, and your abilities be well able to perform; be it in Hospital, Prison, or in any other particular place: or otherwise to make peace in differences; in composing contentious suits, or reconciling Enemies, and the like good offices of Christian Charitie; whereby the holie day will be trulie sanctified, God honoured, and your soul will obtain much Grace and benediction.

But what may justlie be lamented now amongst most Christians is, if we examine but the practise of most Mens actions of this sinful Age; we shall find that the chiefest difference which the Libertines now give to the Sabbath, and other Holy daies, above the rest; consists but in better Cloaths, greater cheer, and much more idlenesse, than upon other daies. So that whereas the institution of those solemn feasts, were first to purge our souls from sin contracted by the secular negotiations of the week daies past; we much rather defile them, as Swine wallowing in their mire; to whom God speaks by his Prophet: *I have with detestation rejected your solemnities*; and truly with great cause, *Amos 5.* to solemnise the holy daies after so sinful a manner, is much more befitting the sensual Epicures, and the faithlesse Atheist, than true Christian

Christian Catholicks: nor is God so highly offended in any other daies of the week, as he is upon these; wherein there is given so great occasion of much more sin, by the usual excessse of good Cheer, Apparel, and idlenesse; the three proper instruments for Gluttony, Luxury, and for several other sorts of sensual vice; supposing (as I said) that sinful excessse be therein: for both better Cheer and Apparel may be then vertuously used, as well in due honor of the day; as also by friendly Hospitality, to preserve true love and Charity with our Neighbor.

Nor do I here intend to cry down with the over tyrannous Sectaries, all honest, and publick recreations upon those days, in the afternoon. (the Sermon and Even-song being done) No, they having spent well the Morning, and done also their Afternoons duty to God in the Church, he will be far from taking offence at honest, and innocent recreation; whereby poor Servants, and others, now dulled with the whole weeks work; may then have some little freedom for relaxation of mind, and to revive, and cheer up their Spirits to begin the new week with fresh courage again their accustomed labour. And to hinder them of this innocent pastime, doth much rather resemble Puritanical cruelty; than any vertue, or true Christian devotion: which coming from the Holy

Ghost, it cannot be in that severe spirit of tyrannous rigor; but in his spirit, by whom all

Wisd: 8:

things are sweetly disposed.

Now



Now as concerning your ordinary deuotions (if leisure and good commodity will permit) after your daily Morning Prayers, and other vsual Deuotions; make on those dayes some more than ordinary Spiritual Lecture; say your Even-song also after Dinner (if opportunity be offered,) and let not the whole day pass without some good work: as in visiting some sick Person; or to comfort such as either corporally, or spiritually may stand most in need of your help; or finally to exercise at the least some one of the holie works of mercy. Take more time on those daies for reading spiritual Books, and make a diligent examen of your last weeks comportment towards God: whether faithful in your good purposes for the amendment of your life? or if not rather worse, by continuing and increasing your former bad habits? whereat confound your self; and renew with great fervour your former resolutions of amendment; and with the next new week, begin also a new reformation: for *there is no better way* (saith holy Sales) *to end happily a true spiritual life, than daily to begin the same*: and to esteem, with an humble heart, all very little worth, which formerly we have done. This holy and most profitable practise may be greatly nourished, and our souls much strengthened also in all these Pious exercises, by this ensuing help.



*Of spiritual Lecture, a proper exercise  
for all Festival days.*

**S**piritual Lecture is a holy magazen which doth furnish both our memory and understanding with Pious thoughts for Heavenly contemplation, whereby to unite our souls unto God; it excites us to the practise of vertue; and therefore though it be daily necessarie for the vertuous soul, yet principally to be practised those dayes peculiarly dedicated to the Divine service of God; to whom we speak by Prayer; and by spiritual Lecture God speaks unto us. Which two holy exercises have great connexion, and are mutually main helps each one to the other: and as meat and Drink are both necessary for the body, so these are as necessary for the soul.

Omit not therefore to give your dearest soul this needful spiritual food, at such times as you find the best leisure for it. Your reading may be in the imitation or following of Christ, in the Saints lives, in some of *Granada's* his works, in the Introduction to a devout life, in the Spiritual Combat, in the Resolution, or a Chapter of the holie Scripture in the New Testament, upon your knees with all reverent Devotion; and not with curiosity to become Learned in disputing of it, (as Sectaries are accustomed) nor so much to know good things, as to put the same in holy practise; nor for delighting the understanding, but much rather to enflame our heart and will upon the love of God, and  
for

for the exercise of vertue; whereby you may draw from thence humility and happy profit to your soul; supposing that your reading sacred Scripture (in vulgar language) be with the good liking of your Ghostly Father; for he being your spiritual Physician, best knows the interior disposition of your soul; whereby to judge if it be fitting spiritual food for you; which is not for all stomacks rightly to digest being in it (saith St. Peter) certain things 2 Pet. 3. hard to be understood, which the unlearned, and unstable deprave, as also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own perdition: which plainly sheweth, that it is not for all unlearned Persons presumptuously to read this sacred word of God, no more than it is for the sick to feed upon strong and most nourishing meat, which though very good of it self, yet not to be taken by them, but with great danger of death; as sad experience doth make it manifest by the audacious, and bold presumption of our ignorant and mechanical Readers, and Expositors of Gods holy word: from whence are sprung so many frantick and Fanatick Sects, as brings a deluge of perdition to those poor abused souls. But to return, from what by this abuse of holy Scripture I was withdrawn; and to perform your spiritual Lecture, both with profit and true method therein; it is most necessary that you observe these advertisements, as followeth.

First, that placing your self in Gods Divine presence (as in Prayer) you raise lovingly your heart to him, and humbly crave his grace to make profit of what you are going to read.

R<sup>t</sup> 2

Secondly,

Secondly, read leisurely, and not as if you desired to see quickly an end of the book: but meeting with some good point for your instruction, pause there, and consider it with leisure and good attention, as if it were God himself who should speak thereby to you; which done then go on, and still praise the same.

Thirdly, read not (as is said) for curiosity to satisfy your mind with knowledge; but to enflame the will to the practise of Piety: And not to read the same book, or Chapter (if like you) twice, or thrice over; for it is the leisurely and perfect digestion which breedeth the purest blood.

Fourthly, a quiet and reposed mind is necessary for the reaping profit by reading: for as unquiet water reflects such broken and confused species of the shadow which is cast upon it, so one scarcely can perceive any true proportion thereof: so likewise it is the very same with an unquiet, and troubled mind with any ill governed passion; which is incapable then to make any profitable conception (or but very imperfectly at the most) with the best spiritual Books; by reason that it being disquiet in itself, it needs must reflect but broken, and confusedly imperfect conceptions of what is read.

Finally, with a recollected and quiet mind in reverence, and devotion, let your reading be not so much by way of studie, to know, but rather in the spirit of true Piety, to gather from thence some spiritual profit for the good of your soul; and fail not also to draw from

your reading some good point in particular  
 which may induce you to the holy practise of  
 vertue; standing ever most carefully upon your  
 guard against its greatest Enemy (that sin of  
 sloath;) which but once getting foot in your  
 way it will endanger the best Vertue in your  
 soul. This dangerous vice of Spiritual sloath, and  
 tedious unwillingnesse to all Exercise of Holy  
 Vertue; I will endeavour to cure by this enfor-  
 ced Article; in which our loving Lord  
 hath bid us to have recourse unto God by frequent  
 and earnest Prayer; that he vouchsafe to  
 us *Spiritual sloath, and indevotion;*  
*which is carefully to be avoided upon*  
*these Holy Daies; instructed for the*  
*exercise of Prayer, and piety.*

**T**his Vice is properly a languishing of the  
 Soul; a dullnesse of the mind; and an un-  
 willingness of the will towards all Spiritual  
 devotion; which declines us from all pious ex-  
 ercises, and makes us negligent and unwilling  
 in the practise of Vertue: it inclines us to give  
 over our accustomed Prayers, or at most to per-  
 form them but very negligently; and only by  
 halves.

The great danger of this sin is sufficiently  
 declared by those words of our blessed Saviour:  
*The Tree which beareth not good fruit shall be cut  
 down, and cast into the fire.* The Fig tree, which  
 bore no Fruit, he commanded to be cut down.  
 Therefore also doth it occupy the ground. We  
 now know grievously that sloathful servant of

Mar. 7. 19

Lu. 13. 8.

Mar. 25.  
30.

the Gospel was justly punished for neglecting to  
employ for his Masters profit the Talent which  
was given him for that end: and why then may  
not such as spend their whole time in sin and  
slothfulness expect and fear the like?

This pernicious sin of sloth is usually most  
predominant in us upon the Festival daies  
consecrated to the glory of God, and our own  
souls good: Against which capital vice, and  
source of so much sin; our sovereign remedie  
must be to have recourse unto God by frequent  
and earnest Prayer; that he vouchsafe to en-  
kindle in our hearts the ardent flame of devo-  
tion; and the true servour of Piety.

From this vicious root of sloth proceeds our  
great inconstancy in all good purposes; as also  
diffidence to perform what by Gods inspirations  
we had resolved for his glory, and our own souls  
good: It produceth dissipation of mind, & great  
distraction in all our exercises, of Prayer and  
Piety, at Masse, Sermons, and spiritual Lectures,  
&c. And finally, all sin of Omission is originally  
derived from sloth.

This most pernicious vice draws after it many  
more great mischiefs to our soul, and deprives it  
of all vertue; for it being the utter Enemy to la-  
bour; by consequence it needs must banish ver-  
tue, which is not to be gained but by pain.  
1ly. It bereaveth the soul of all true peace,  
causing her but great disquiet and sadness.  
2ly. It openeth the doore to all manner of com-  
plications, and sin; for the Devil finding a Soul  
idle and void of employment, he enters with-  
out difficulty. 4ly. A slothful Soul doing but  
actions



actions of Vertue but unwillingly, and by constraint: by consequence she doth them but negligently, and without all merit: for he is accursed by the Prophet, who doth the work of God with negligence; but fervour in devotion and in conquering sloath, produceth the quite contrary effects with much joy and peace.

Observe punctually the accustomed times for your Prayer, so far as conveniency will permit. Quit not your former usual holy Exercises, though they seem never so barren and drie: yes, though your fancy perswade you that they nothing avail you; yet be but faithfully patient with true humble perseverance, and God will at last not fail to bestow both comfort, and his holy blessing upon you.

It is also a great help against this spiritual sloath and indevotion, to read the lives of Saints; and to consider attentively therein, the great fervour and devotion wherewith they served God. And above all it might abundantly suffice to cure our sinful sloath; by considering the incessant, and most painful labours which Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, did undergo for our Example, and Salvation: he spending frequently whole nights in Prayer to his Heavenly Father in our behalf. What wearisome journeys through several Provinces made he to instruct the rude and ignorant; as also to cure the infirm, both in bodie and Soul? It may well confound us also to consider with what faithful alacrity the Apostles made their continual Pilgrimages about the world, to



plant the Holy Gospel, for the salvation of souls; and with what cheerful constancy they gave their lives for the profession of their holy Faith. Finally, by what other way, have so many glorious Martyrs, Confessors, and Virgins obtained their immortal Crown of blisse: but by conquering sloathful sensuality, in the combat against Flesh and Blood; whereby this dangerous Enemy (spiritual sloath and indevotion) being overcome, Gods holy will commands, and our corrupt nature is sweetly subdued, and then takes pleasure to obey.

S. Bernard writing to his sister, (a religious woman) he there gives us all an excellent and very efficacious remedie against this most dangerous spiritual disease of sloath: which remedie is composed of these three sovereign ingredients; *Reading, Prayer, and Exercise*. The servant of God (saith he to his vertuous sister) is still to be employed either in good Lecture, in Prayer, or in some sitting labour; into these three Exercises he exhorted her to repart the day; allotting the first part thereof for Prayer; the second for spiritual Lecture; and the third for some corporal Labour: for by Prayer we are purified; by reading, we are instructed and taught; and by corporal labour, we greatly prevent the temptations of our Ghostly Enemy. This holy and profitable advice of Saint Bernard agrees well with the common Proverb: *sometimes read, sometimes labour, sometimes devoutly pray; by which your time will seem short, and your labour goes lightly away.*

Hitherto

Hitherto I having proposed to you Gods Divine presence, and true purity of intention in the first place; as the two eies whereby to direct all our actions to their happy end: the next was how we ought to regulate the same from our rising until we go to bed: After which I shewed how God was to be honoured by prayer, as also by several other holy Exercises, and fervent ejaculations from the heart to God; according to the different occasions, and encounters, during the time of the day; which were followed by the practise of divers principal virtues, most conducing to the holy practise of Piety. And lastly, by the right observation of the Sabbath and other Festival and Fasting daies commanded by Holy Church. It therefore now remains, that the next Rule should be to regulate, both in general, and particular our Conversation; which is so over-spreading a Tree, as it extends unto all the rest of our actions, by the multiplicity of its several branches: whereof some being superfluous, others defective, and many very hurtful and vicious; therefore a particular instruction is here but very necessary, to teach us how rightly to rule, and to cultivate this unruly Plant: which by Gods helping Grace shall be by

The

## The Fifth

## R U L E

*Regulating our Conversation, as well  
in general, as in particular; and  
recommending to us what is  
laudable therein; and dissuading  
from what is vicious.*

**M**AN being by Nature a sociable Creature,  
must needs be pleased with conversation  
and society; God having given him interiorly  
understanding to learn, and to conceive; as  
also speech exteriorly to communicate the same  
unto others: and therefore we see that he hath  
not imparted to all men equally the like per-  
fections and talents, but some to one, and some  
to another; to the end, that by a mutual com-  
munication, they might help one another: as  
he also sheweth by the very Fruits of the Earth,  
which are differently produced, according to  
the several Climats of the World; that by a  
mutual exchange (as need should require) man  
might be forced to understand the dependance  
which one hath of the other, and thereby be  
induced

induced to mutual love, and assistance. Con-  
 versation therefore being ordained by God, as  
 Natural to Man, the right use of it is both ne-  
 cessary and very laudable, and only the abuse  
 thereof to be avoided; which being the task  
 here undertaken by this present Rule, I con-  
 ceive the best method will be, first briefly to de-  
 clare, what is required for a true laudable con-  
 versation, 2ly. To shew how it may be obtain-  
 ed. And lastly, to make appear in particular,  
 wherein it is both sinful and vicious, and how  
 it may be remedied.

*What Conditions are required for a Lau-  
 dable and true Christian Conversation.*

**M**ANs condition is best known by his Con-  
 versation; who is terrestrial, loves earth—Joh. 3.  
 ly and worldly discourse; but the celestial hath  
 his thoughts upon Heaven; yea, observe but  
 his words, his conversation, and discourse, and  
 his very speech well discovers what he is: So  
 Peter being asked his opinion of a youth, with  
 whom he had never spoke; *Spake Youth* (said Joh. 3.  
 he) *that I may see thee*; for from the abundance  
 of the heart our mouth will speak; and we  
 willingly give ear to what it most affects; and  
 what suits not to our affection will be but redi-  
 culous and disgustful. As we read of that Holy  
 Abbot Macarius, who upon all discourse con-  
 cerning the World, was still subject to sleep;  
 but if speaking of God, or of heavenly things,  
 he was then very attentive and wakeful. Con-  
 verse

1 Phil. 27 *verse* ye worthy of the Gospel of Christ (saith the great Apostle.) he means our Conversation must be answerable to the spirit and Gospel of Jesus Christ; that is humble, holy, mild, pure, affecting eternal things, and despising temporal; aiming at the imitation of our most perfect and holy Original, the incarnate Son of God; who being our form and true model, our Conversation ought to be drawn thereby, as coppies in imitation of his, the best we can. Our Conversation (saith devout Sales) must be modest, without affectation; free, without austerity; sweet and pleasant, without ostentation; gentle, without contradiction, except to very good purpose, and with great modesty. Finally, it must be sweet, modest, affable, and mild in words, and behaviour, pleasant in countenance, quiet in mind, and humble in heart; avoiding all vehemency, and choler, all sharpnesse, bitterness, vanity, insolency, and rudenesse, which may be displeasing, or troublesome to any. As also all immodest, or unseemly discourse; all imperious gests, and tone of command must be avoided, they being offensive to others in company; as is also all Melancholy, or distastful sadness. In fine, we must use affable and courteous carriage towards all, yielding, and accommodating our selves unto others (saith S. Ambrose) with moderation in command; with affability in discourse; with respect, and civility in words; with patience in hearkning without interrupting; with modesty and good grace, and with a cheerful countenance. All which hath incredible power to draw and gain the hearts and love of men:

for



for sweetnesse, good Grace, and civil affability, are as the flowers of a true vertuous, and grateful Conversation; and they set it out with so pleasing a lustre, and produce likewise so great fruit of edification thereby; as it is most admirable to be read of *S. Lucian* that blessed Martyr, whose winning, and attractive power was so very great in his outward modesty, comely comportment, and good grace in his conversation; as the very sight thereof had force to move the persecuting Pagans to embrace the Christian Faith; and *Maximian* the cruel Tyrant (who put him to death) understanding with great admiration, what had happened; he desired, out of vain curiositie to behold the Man: but fearing too much influence of so powerful an object to conquer his malice, and to command his affection to the Catholick Faith, he caused a curtain to be drawn, that looking through the same, he might satiate himself with the aspect of that blessed Man, as you may read at large in *Surin*, January the 17th.

You behold in this comely mirror of true modesty, its power in conversation to gain the hearts of all People; how gratefully it is to God, and his Angels, and how much it is honoured by Men; as may well also appear in what we read of *S. Bernard*, who by his example of this vertue, had brought his Religious to so perfect imitation; as Pope *Eugenius*, and his Cardinals coming to *Claraual*, they could not abstain from pouring out many tears of Consolation to behold the very exterior carriage



age and so edifying a comportment amongst his Religious Brethren.

It was observed generally by the Persecutors, and cruel Judges of Gods blessed Martyrs; and to their great astonishment, and confusion a most admirable cheerful sweetnesse, and constant alacrity in their greatest torment, with so pleasing a carriage, and in so mild and willing Patience; as they made the verie hearts of their greatest Enemies to relent. And of S. Steven we read: *that all who sate in the Councel beholding him, did see his face, as it were the face of an Angel*, his joy for suffering in such a cause did so transport his soul, as it could not be restrained from that apparent communication, which it made, even exteriorly to appear throughout the whole body it self. And therefore this sweetnesse of affability must come from the heart and not consist only in a superficial exterior only; which is but of Hypocrites: for our Blessed Saviour bids us to learn this Lesson of him, who is mild of heart, and not by only outward word and Ceremonie. *Math. 11.*

In sum, true Christian, and laudable conversation, is a mean betwixt two extreames; neither inclining to the one, of a meer secular jollity; nor yet bending to the other of an imprudent austericy: but rather (as best becomes the testimonie of a good Conscience, and a true Christian, and modest libertie) it must consist in the mean of a sweet, well pleasing, and humble modesty, well tempered with a cheerful countenance, and with affability of speech, always willing and ready to do what good we can

can for any: for the very manner of doing a good turn is frequently of much more power to gain love, than is the thing it self which is done. Will you finally know a true perfect, and right Christian Conversation? it must be answerable to the notion which is given by S. Paul: in being an example to the faithful, in our <sup>2 Tim. 4.</sup> speech and comportment; in Charity, in Faith, and in Chastity, with edification to all; but chiefly to the Enemies of the Catholick Church: bearing your Conversation good amongst the Gentiles, (saith S. Peter,) an example in good works, (addeth S. Paul,) in integrity, irreprehensible; that <sup>1 Petri, 2. 12.</sup> he who is on the contrary part may be afraid, bearing no ill to say of you. <sup>2 Tim. 7.</sup>

This is the conversation which Jesus Christ, and his Apostles require of us; and which is ever to be accompanied with these four requisite circumstances. First, with choice of good company. Secondly, with a right intention. Thirdly, with innocency. And fourthly with moderation. Be patient in all occurrences of affairs, of humors, and accidents; meek in behaviour, modest in our actions, circumspect in our words, faithful in our promises, exact in our employments, pure in our intention. Let finally your discourse be well seasoned with prudence. (saith the Apostle) that you may know, <sup>Colos. 4.</sup> how, and with whom you are to converse, and to comport your self with every one according to their Talents, and several condition; whereby accomodating your self unto all, you may keep Charitie with all, and become grateful and pleasing unto every one. To conclude; the best

Pl. 249.

best Conversation in this World, is that which most resembles what is amongst the Saints in Heaven which only consists in praising and glorifying God : and that we remember his divine presence in all we do.

A. m. 17.

m. 17.

. 21. 2

A. m. 17.

*The means, and best expedient to obtain true Christian, and laudable Conversation.*

**B**Y the premisses you understand what conditions are required for a laudable and vertuous conversation ; but because it is not so much the knowledge , as the possession of what we know, which makes us happy ; therefore you may here expect some good expedient for gaining the practise of such a conversation.

Wherein for your satisfaction, I conceive no humane means more powerful to beget in Man a vertuous & grateful conversation ; than to converse with such persons, as frame theirs according to the former conditions ; for they are to us as a true looking-glasse, wherein beholding our defects, we are moved by a wholsom confusion both to hate and amend them.

A. m. 17.

This is so well experienced a truth, and so truly consonant to reason ; as thereupon that common Proverb is well grounded, which saith : *tell me what company thou keepest, and I will tell thee what thou art.* Yea, the holy Ghost assures us ; that *who walketh with the wise, shall be wise ; but the friend of fools, shall be made like.*

Prov. 13:

The

The exceeding great power which conversation and company keeping hath to make not only deep impression in the heart; but even to change the strongest inclinations of nature itself, most manifestly appears, not only in Men, but also in the most brute and savage Beasts; as is plain to be seen in the ravenous Wolfe, and in the fierce and cruel Lion: both which by the companie, and continual habitation with Men, become gentle and very familiar. And therefore if Company and Societie have so conquering a force upon natures of so quite a difference kind; how much more powerful must it needs be, to work upon a subject of the self same nature; wherein by reason of a Sympathy, and nearnesse of condition, mutual impressions are made with far greater facility. And this, experience daily teacheth us, since we see so great good which is gained by frequenting vertuous and civil companies; and on the contrary, daily examples make but too manifest, how extremely dangerous it is to frequent Persons of debaucht and sinful conversation, whose multitude of unhappy souls do perish thereby eternally? for it strikes them with a mortal infection more pestilent and contagious, than is the greatest Plague. *O the great contagion of an ill company,* (saith S. Augustine, who had sufficiently experienced the same) *who, egging forward to vice, it is counted a shame, not to be shamelesse and impudent.* These Companions mock at all Piety, and jeer but all such as practise it; and they, of all others, are the most dangerous snares of the Diuel, to draw a multitude of souls unto Hell.

Parents be ye therefore very careful with whom your Children converse; and take heed to the example which you your selves shall give them: for your comportment being their rule; if that be vertuous, it will give them undoubtedly a much better impression to receive, than any verbal instruction could be able to do; for so *Seneca* (saith *Seneca*) the way to a simple is short; but by words it is very long; and we believe our eyes, much rather than our ears which gave S. Gregory good cause to call example a living Lesson, because it is perswasive above all the rest.

This great power of perswasion had S. Augustine our Apostle of England, and his fellow Brethren by their vertuous life and conversation, in that happle work of converting our first English Antecessors from Paganism to our Christian Catholick Faith: our Chronicles mentioning, that it was their Holy Life; and Religious behaviour which first disposed King Ethelbert to a good opinion of that Religion, which had taught them the practise of so great Charity, and contempt of all Wordly Pleasures, and Commodities of this life, which his Pious Opinion of the holy Catholick Faith, being soon after more perfected in him, by Gods Divine grace he became a most zealous good Christian and endeavoured all he could to promote throughout the Kingdom the blessed Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To this good means of example for gaining a vertuous conversation, you must also adjoyne an exact morning vigilancy over all passionate



moment, which may happen in the unexpected  
and exasperating occasions of that day: where-  
in foreseeing the danger, you may in quiet peace  
and mildnesse more easily prevent the malice  
both of your Ghostly, and Worldly Enemies.

It will be of great importance, that we  
suppose to our selves, as a pattern, some Per-  
son in particular, who is endued with this per-  
fect conversation: go to Campegius and imi-  
tate Paulin, said S. Augustine: as giving coun-  
til to some who desired to advance themselves  
in this perfection. But our chief pattern and  
best model; which we are principally to imitate;  
(as near as we can) is the Conversation of our  
Divine Original, the eternal Word incarnate;  
here conversing upon Earth with so great mild-  
nesse and humility of heart amongst Men.

This is the Lesson he so expressly recommend-  
ed to us, to learn of him who is mild and humble  
of heart, where it is to be observed, that he joyns  
these two vertues; Mildnesse and Humility to-  
gether; because they cannot well be separated:  
Humility being properly the interior sweetness  
of the mind; as is mildnesse the exterior ex-  
pression of the same: the former is grounded  
in a true Christian heart; and the latter dwells  
upon his countenance; which having its de-  
pendance upon an humble heart, no choler can  
make impression in such a countenance; nor  
can any sign of anger rest upon that eye; no  
complaint can be heard from that mouth, nor  
any bitterness from such a tongue; no frow-  
ling frown appears in that brow; but all is  
sweet and amiable, both to God and Man.

Math.  
11.



You have seen what conditions are required for a vertuous and laudable Conversation; al- also the best expedient whereby to obtain the same. It now follows, that in the next place I declare which be the vicious branches most destructive to Christian conversation; that they being first cut off, and separated, our conversation may become grateful and vertuous, producing in our soules happy fruit for Eternity.

But to prevent in the beginning a common objection, wherewith the Enemies of all Holy Conversation endeavour to possesse the sensual Libertines; and thereby to deterre them from embracing it: we must here first observe, how they would have all to believe, that honest recreation, and civil mirth are incompatible with this vertuous and laudable Conversation; than which, nothing is more false, as by what here followeth will very plainly appear; for

*Civil mirth, and cheerful alacrity, are well befitting true Christian Conversation.*

**A**lthough Alacrity in Conversation, cheerfulness in countenance, and mirth, in fitting recreation are exceeding commendable, and by no means to be excluded from true Christian conversation; yet the Devil, and his impious instruments would make us believe; that vertue and mirth; Piety, and cheerful recreation can by no means be associated together, which is a most malicious falsity: for God com-  
manding

meeding his children to serve him with joy; for-  
 bid all Sadness, and melancholy; yes, mirth  
 with a pure intention, may be meritorious, as  
 well as our Prayer. Psal. 99.

Blessed *Sals* (that Father of all sweet spiri-  
 tuality) had a most pleasant and winning affi-  
 nity both in his words and behaviour. *S. An-  
 thony* had so very cheerful a countenance, as  
 in a multitude he was easie to be known, even  
 by such as had never seen him before; and it  
 was to be much admired (considering his incre-  
 dible, and so long continuance of such austeri-  
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 and affable humour, accompanied alwaies with  
 a pleasant behaviour, and a most courteous  
 comportment unto all; Yea, *Palladius* recompts  
 that one might have beheld those holy Fathers  
 of the Desert, by their only outward aspect, to  
 have manifested abundantly the inward purity  
 of their happy souls; and to have enjoyed upon  
 earth, far greater felicity, than the whole world  
 had been able to afford them: no Melancholly  
 having power to seise upon their hearts, which  
 were so truly united to God himself. This makes  
 them truly joyful, and their Faces cheerrul like to Judith 16  
 the Saints. Yea, we read in the lessons of *St.  
 Romualdus*, Founder of that Holy Order of the  
*Camaldulenses*; that although his was almost a  
 continual exercise of austerity, fasting, and  
 Prayer; and that the fervour of Coelestial Ma-  
 gification so bedewed his Eies with holy tears, as  
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beheld him until his dying day; which was in the age of full fix score years: whereof one hundred of them he had happily spent in the most holy austerity with a joyfull and contented mind. S. Greg. Nides writing the life of Saint Ephraim, reporteth that for all his great austerity of life, he had so Angelical a countenance joined with so modest a comportment, that none could behold him without great respect, and being made better thereby.

Act 6.15

We read to like effect of S. Stephen, who while he was brought to the Concel, and there most falsely accused of blasphemy and sedition by the wicked Scribes and Pharisees, and cruel Jews, who with all rage and cruelty did seek thereby maliciously to take his life: all that saw in the Concel beholding him, saw his face, as it were the face of an angel. The like were also the pleasing countenances of many constant, and joyfull Martyrs in presence of their enraged Persecuters, and most bloodie Tyrants, in all their greatest torments suffered for the Profession of the Holy Catholick Faith.

By which it sufficiently appears, that Saints, and holy people are not so sad and Melancholly, as worldly Libertines would have us to believe; but much rather joyfull, and very cheerful, as it becomes their happie Consciences.

Prov. 15, which is to them, according to the holy Prov. 15. verb, *a continual Banquet.*

And therefore you now remaining sufficiently perswaded (as I hope) that cheerfulness in aspect, and a pleasant countenance do well accord with true vertuous and holy Conversation.

on



on: I will endeavour to make it no less useful  
 that innocent harmless mirth, and agreeable  
 society: in no wise unbefitting, that serious  
 facing that, neither examples, nor au-  
 thority can be wanting to make themselves ap-  
 parent a truth. No, for true piety, and right  
 Christian devotion, are far from excluding this  
 grateful affability: nor doth it hinder the  
 creation, or honesty, and innocent society;  
 (wherein modesty refrains all vicious excesses)  
 but much rather requires the sweet, sociable  
 cheerful alacrity, with a pleasant modesty, as most  
 commendable, and frequently gains much more  
 good, for their amendment, than could  
 very, or over rigidly composed conversation,  
 which being too austere, would become unpleas-  
 ing. Yes, cause exertion, and but disorderly  
 true devotion and piety, which is cheerful, and  
 full of content, and thereby becomes attrac-  
 tive, and is neither tedious nor difficult. No,  
 true devotion makes the mind cheerful, and  
 much replenish'd with joy: nor is a pleasant  
 humour any ways contrary to an unbecoming  
 Christian piety, as very wrongfully some would  
 have us to believe.

This Truth is made manifest by the Exam-  
 ple of many Saints who have been of this pleas-  
 ant humour, and full of innocent and pleas-  
 ing jests in their discourse. S. Greg. Nazianzen  
 records of those two great Saints, and most il-  
 lustrious Prelates, S. Basil and S. Martin, that  
 they so seasoned their Conversation with pleas-  
 ant and grateful speeches, as they were able  
 thereby to have dissipated the darkest cloud of



Melancholy from the most dejected heart; the happy effects of which grateful alacrity, the said S. Basil, having well observed by experience, it gave him just occasion to wish that other holy persons would also mix their Conversation with the like innocent, and true spiritual mirth: wherein that most renowned Heroe of our Country, Sir *John Moore*, in all his Conversation, did excell in facetious innocent mirth, which even did sweeten devotion; as in our presence the effects thereof are manifest, and very admirable, by the winning and cheerfully attractive piety, which that skillful Master of all spirituality and devotion Blessed *Subiack* so happily infused into Christian hearts, who by a familiar, pious and cheerful condescendency in his prudent proceeding with *Soulds* hath made devotion to appear with so amiable a countenance, as multitudes were most happily drawn to embrace it, who before durst hardly entertain a thought for the practise of what they conceived to be so very difficult and austere. Yea, the numerous happy *Soulds*, who now addict themselves with gusto unto the practise of holy piety and devotion, must needs acknowledge a grateful memory to this incomparable Man, whose cheerful, affable, and winning spirit, hath so greatly contributed to the increase of all true piety and devotion in this our age. Nor can it be doubted, but by this sweetness and pleasing affability many *Soulds* have been gained to God, as well as by serious Exhortations, and the strongest discourse. *S. Ignatius of Loyola* was also far

from

from severity herein? nor did he approve in his Brethren the practice of too highly a com-  
mended Conversation, which much more pro-  
bably may but trouble mens minds, rather than  
gain their souls: nor is it the saddest, and most  
mortified countenance (and great St. Anthony)  
which gives most fear or terroure to the Devil:  
and therefore very many great Saints have been  
of a pleasant, merry, and delighesome humour,  
and yet of interior great vertues, and mortified  
perfection.

To which number, I need not make much  
doubt to add that holy man, and of late times,  
whose acquaintance as it was ever most dear to  
me, so must I justly account it one of Gods  
greatest blessings to have granted me so friendly  
an admittance to the most pious conversation  
of that blessed man, *Monsieur Pons de Paul*  
Superior, and first General of that holy Con-  
gregation of the Fathers of the *Mission*: a man  
whose blessed memory for his ardent Charity,  
most profound humility, and very gracious af-  
fability, deserves to remain in benediction for  
ever. For such was the smiling countenance,  
with a pleasing, mild, and grateful humour and  
conversation of this holy man, as it had force  
to appeale the greatest Enemy, and energick  
power to perswade, what strongest reasons, in  
another would have little availed? His inten-  
tion was so exceeding pure for the glory of  
God, and so very free from all mixture of any  
proper interest, as it hath drawn a most ad-  
mirable blessing upon his so fruitful la-  
bours, in the establishment which he hath  
made

made of so many great works of Charity, both for the poor, and common good, to be greatly admired; and for which all France hath much obligation, with due thanksgiving to God, to be grateful, and to beseech his Divine goodwill, that the self same holy spirit may remain in his worthy Children, which by his instructions, and so rare an example, he hath most happily left infused amongst them, in that his most laudable Congregation. I will conclude this, with the words of S. Ignatius Martyr, writing to the *Philadelphians*, saying to them, that he, seeing beheld their Bishop, he was even ravished with his rare modesty and seemly (sweet behaviour; wherewith (he said) he was able to do much more without speaking, than others with long Orations.

By all which, and by innumerable the like examples, it remains most evident, how well both civil mirth and cheerful alacrity do beseeem true Christian conversation; and are no waies contrary to vertuous and holy piety: experience making it most manifest, that a good word of devotion being delivered with a cheerful countenance, and with an open and friendly heart, even penetrates the soul, as doth a note of harmonious Musick the ear; and taking by that means a true possession of the Soul, it works strong effects in producing good practises of Vertue; supposing (as it is to be understood) that the jests be alwaies religiously modest, and the intencion good; it being unlawful in all conversation and discourse whatsoever, to use either scurrilous, or uncivil words, and much

much less profane, or irreverent jests: & especially, so carelessly to let loose the reins of intemperance to unsuiting liberty, as to forget thereby Gods divine presence, or due reverence thereunto. Briefly, nothing ought to be said, or done in such conversation, which may be unbecoming, either modesty, decency, the person, time, or place.

And now true Christian conversation thus justified against the former calumnies: It remains that I also shew

*The lawfulness of moderate Recreation in Gaming, and Rising Sports, and wherein the abuse of them consists.*

**W**HAT God by so many miraculous favours conducted the Israelites into the fruitful Land of Promise, there wanted not malicious Spies, who by the many false reports which they made of the unwholesome air, bad qualities of the Country, and barbarous fierceness of the Inhabitants, they so terrified all the rest of their brethren; as had it not been for faithful Caleb and Joshua (who manifestly refuted the falshood of their Reports) they would rather have returned to their Egyptian Captivity, than exposed themselves to such insufferable difficulties, as they were made to conceive. Num. 13:

The Devil and his Instruments have ever in the same manner endeavoured to perswade the world,

world, that in a religious and vertuous life, there is nothing but deep sadness, and melancholy to be found; no mirth, nor any alacrity to be enjoyed; no other exercise but Prayer, Fasting, Hair-cloath, and continual solitude; whereby those persons who add themselves to devotion, must needs become (say they) preevish, stupid, and very infirm. And upon this false perswasion, they endeavour to make men to flee both their example and company.

But to shew both the malice, and great ignorance whereupon they ground this false calumny of devotion, and of a vertuous life; it may suffice to shew how both *S. Thomas*, with *Aristotle*, and generally all Divines agree; that to use honest and fitting recreation, is an act of the vertue which they call *Eutrapelia*, and may properly be interpreted, *alacrity*, or *mirth*, which is not only laudable, but also very necessary for man, whose vigour and spirits being but limited and very weak; it is impossible for him to be so continually busied in serious occupations, but of necessity he must have both ease and relaxation, whereby to refresh and give new strength to his spirits by this vertue of *Eutrapelia*; or fit recreation; ordained (saith *S. Tho.*) by God himself for man, as a medicine, or fitting remedie against his infirmity, to repair his corporal forces; as also to revive the spirits of his mind, thereby to make him more able to discharge his duty both to God and man; which vertue consists in the mediocrity betwixt these two extremes; of an excesse in  
retire-



retirement from all futing diversionement and  
company on the one side; and of spending un-  
worthily our whole time in idle pastimes and  
play on the other; but this middle way is  
both laudable, and very necessary for all such  
as aspire to a vertuous life; after the usual  
manner; remembering the advice of the blessed  
Bishop of *Geraz*, that we so passe our time in  
these momentary present contents, as that we  
lose not eternally. *Even reason is self convinces the neces-*  
*sity of this sitting recreation.* For as mans bo-  
dy requires sleep, meat, and repose, whereby to  
repair his decayed forces; so likewise his spirits  
have no lesse need by some cheerful relaxation  
to be refreshed and restored. This is verifi'd by  
the practise of that great Evangelist, and Christ  
his beloved favourite, blessed *St. John*, who re-  
creating himself with a Partridge, whilst a cer-  
tain Huntsman taking scandal thereat; was in-  
structed by the same holy Apostle, how needful  
that innocent relaxation was for re-gaining  
new force to be employed in the service of God.  
This is that holy intention which makes our re-  
creation meritorious, as well as our Prayer;  
and which God by the mouth of his Royal  
Prophet hath so frequently recommended to  
us, that we should *recreate our selves in him with* *Pl. 67.*  
*joy. Rejoyce ye in our Lord; and he will grant you*  
*your hearts desire.* Now we truly rejoyce in our *Pl. 36.*  
Lord; when our intention, with due circum-  
stance invites us to serve him by those actions  
which we do; and because we conceive it to be  
his blessed will; which being the Religious mo-  
tive



size of our recreation: it needs must be meritorious and pleasing to God: and in this sense we are bid by King David, to serve God with joy, as truly we have great cause, seeing that we enjoy this happy means to sanctifie all our actions as to ease a race. Give therefore this great value, by a good intention, to all your lawful and sitting pleasures: rest not in giving satisfaction merely to nature, but raise it to that higher motive of Gods divine will and pleasure, whereby you may recreate your self in this assured joy: that it will produce you happy fruit for eternity.

Yet as there is nothing in this World; but may easily be viciated by Mans abuse; so also recreation, which of it self is indifferent, (and rightly used, is an act of the aforesaid vertue) it escapes not to be frequently blemished by vicious circumstances, with the foul stain of sin, which the better to avoid, take these ensuing advertisements whereby to know

*What particular abuses in Recreation are principally to be avoided.*

**F**or better preventing the great harm which so usually happens to our souls by the sinful abuse of Recreation: we must here first observe: that it ought to be used with discreet moderation; not making it our chief employment, nor preferring it abusively before the affairs, which either Justice, Charity, or Religion may require

waste at our hands, nor spending more time  
 therein, than either Prudence, or Reason would  
 allow; lest we expose our selves thereby to  
 that shameful reproach which Divine Wisdom  
 hath pronounced against them, who make their *Wisd. 19.*  
 life but a meer pastime, and play: and neglecting  
 their other obligations, they spend whole  
 nights and days in gaming; and pervert there-  
 by the true end of all right Recreation; which  
 is but to refresh our wearied spirits by some ne-  
 cessary pastime; and not to weaken them the  
 more, as those People do, who turn Recreati-  
 on into toiling vexation, and play into unhappy  
 pain, both to body and soul; as at last they will  
 be likely to find, when rendering their account  
 to God, they must make satisfaction for many  
 great sins, occasioned by their disordered ga-  
 ming; besides the losse of their precious time,  
 and temporal means; both which were lent  
 them by God for a far worthier end. O how  
 many Priests will be deeply condemn'd upon  
 this very score, for neglecting their Church  
 duties, and other obliging offices! how many  
 Masters and Mistresses, who abandoning the  
 due care of their Families, by their excess in  
 play, and other pastimes, bring total ruine up-  
 on their Estates, and Children! How many  
 Physicians, permit their poor Patients to perish,  
 whilst their inordinate gaming gives them no  
 leisure, either to study their Diseases, or to assist  
 them in due time! What satisfaction will the  
 negligent and careless Advocate be able to ren-  
 der to their sorrowful Clients, who are redu-  
 ced to ruine and despair for losing their sub-  
 sistence,

blame, and so just a cause, by their pure fault and negligence; who might have procured them due justice and equity, had they but taken more leisure for it, from their excess of play! It is the like with any Prince or Prelate; and with all other conditions whatsoever, who by excess in gaming, neglect the charge which God and their place requires at their hands.

It is also to be observed that this excess in gaming at Cards and Dice, is quite contrary to the very nature, and true end of all right recreation and play; which is properly a recreation or honest pastime, with free and cheerful familiarity, it being but to revive our spirits by some harmlesse relaxation from our more serious employments; whereas this immoderate gaming doth usually so busie our minds with more violent agitation, than could be done by any painful affair; it bending all their spirits with a continual and vexing trouble, accompanied with great unquietnesse, and solicitous apprehension; which usually makes immoderate Gamblers to look with a sad and scowling countenance; to be pettish, peevish, and melancholy; to curse, to swear, and blaspheme, yea sometimes, even furious, and insupportable: and what yet is much worse; it often falleth out, that such as begun to play in good friendship and amity, they leave off with much gall, and great bitterness of mind; and with such quarrels sometimes, as costs them no lesse than their Lives, and the ruine of their Family. And is this to be accompted play! Moreover, they frequently become so very peevish and dis-

quies

quiet in their minds ; as that no stander by dare speak a word in their play, no, nor laugh, nor cough, but those Gamesters will be vexed, and quarrel with the first who doth it, be he friend or foe ; which is the most extravagant folly to be imagined.

In the next place, the sum is also here to be considered which we hazard in play ; it being alwayes to be moderated according to our condition and means ; and ought never to amount to such a quantity, as to disable us to perform what either due debt, or fit maintenance of Family may justly require at our hands ; both which by excesse, and too deep play, happen very often to be hindred, to the great wrong of Creditors, to the desolation of Wife, and Children ; and finally to the restless torment of a guilty Conscience, which permits neither content nor repose. And yet this must be called Recreation and play.

Thus much concerning both the use, as also the abuse of Recreation, and play ; upon occasion of the connexion which it hath with humane conversation. And to proceed with order in the aforesaid Rule for regulacing also in other occasions our conversation ; I will in the next place speak likewise of the usual abuse in eating and drinking : and what comportment is to be used at the Table, for which take this advertisement.

*Concerning Temperance, and our com-  
portment at the Table.*

**O**ur Body being given us by God as a Ser-  
vant to assist the Soul in her operations  
for Beatitude; we are bound to nourish it; yet  
so as it may be without all prejudice to that our  
happy end. We are therefore to be careful,  
that under pretext of satisfying the necessity  
of nature, we satiate not with excess the unru-  
ly appetite thereof; but rather by a virtuous  
moderation in dyet, enable our body to per-  
form the functions which God requires at our  
hands: and by that means to sanctifie even our  
corporal food: for *vertue* (saith S. Basil) *consisteth*  
*not in eating, or not eating, but in the intention*  
*wherewith we eat, our corporal and natural affec-*  
*tions are indifferent of their own proper nature;*  
yet by applying them to a good end or a bad,  
they take the quality, either of vertue, or vice:  
and therefore, *whither you eat, or drink, (saith S.*  
*Paul) or do any other thing, do all to the glory*  
*of God.*

I Cor.  
10.

And truly who barely considers the meer ac-  
tion of feeding, may well be moved to great hu-  
mility thereby; since it is but an imperfection,  
and troublesom defect of nature, forcing Man  
to leave the more noble exercises of higher  
powers in his soul (whereby he converseth with  
God, and his Angels) to spend time and cost  
in supplying this his natural infirmity, wherein



he resembles only the brute and unreasonable Beasts; and whereof the vain delight is no longer enjoyed, than whilst the tongue is turning it in the mouth; nor the Wine is no sooner swallowed, but the delight is past, saith the holy Prophet. Joel. 2.

O how unworthy then of a rational and Christian soul is it to offend God for so base a content; or to hazard her Beatitude upon so small an enjoyment, especially if we consider that the very meat (be it never so dainty, costly, and pleasing to our taste) is no sooner chewed, and sent down the throat, but it becomes most filthy, and abominable to behold; as experience will force us to confesse, when by any sickness we find our selves obliged to ease our stomachs of what we had eaten but immediately before.

These and the like reflexions made holy Job, Job. 3. and many other vertuous people, even to sigh before their meals; whereint notwithstanding yet sensual Men (like very Beasts) place so great content and pleasure, that by sinful excess they oftentimes most grievously offend, and endanger the losse of their souls: becoming so by surfeit, and Drunkenness much worse than brute Beasts, and wholly incapable of the noblest functions of Man.

Now besides this great evil of intemperance, surfeiting, and Drunkenness (considered as a quality of sin) it is also a great Enemy to the health of Man, far more dying by it (as wise Solomon saith) than by the sword; and where eating and drinking is ordained by God to



preserve, and prolong our life; sensual Persons abuse it to the contrary; when they neither strive to govern, nor yet to moderate their disordinate appetite, nor to subdue it to the Rule of reason. And for this very cause it is, that rarely a glutton lives long: or if some one chance so to do; yet his body will be made subject to so many infirmities, as he will be forced to confesse, that he payes dear interest for all the pleasure of his former excesse, and gluttony.

S. *Augustin* may be an admirable example for us in this vertue of Temperance; who telleth us that God had taught him so to moderate the taking of his food (and even his very affection thereunto) as one takes Physick; which is with that considerate moderation, as he would not exceed the proportion conceived necessary for his health. But this must be done

without all pensive scrupulosity, or unpleasing sadness, which (according to the Royal Prophet) is to be banisht from the table of the just; where in the sight of God they must rejoice with alacrity. All quarrels must there be laid aside, and detracting discourse of the absence employing much rather our thoughts and conversation in praise and grateful thankfulness to God; who gives meat in due time, and openeth his hand, he fills every creature with blessing.

In danger of excess, you may do well to call to mind the bitter Gall and Vinegar given to our Blessed Saviour when he wanted refreshment by reason of his excessive thirst upon the Cross, and to remember the great and vertuous

fineness

finence of his chiefest Saints. Raise firmly your heart to God, and rectifie your intention in eating, that thereby you may be the more able to serve him. Say with a fervent ejaculation from the interior of your heart: *O when shall I feed upon the happy Food of Angels in eternal blisse; with that beatificall Vision, in company of the glorious Saints and Angels without end!* And by this means you may feed spiritually your Soul, as corporally you do your bodie; and your very refection may be made thereby as pleasing to God, as the saying your Prayers.

You being now set down at the table with a sharp and hungry appetite; make some good reflexion thereupon: as considering but with how small an appetite, or desire you do usually feed your soul by Prayer, or Sacrament, or by the practise of holy vertue; which notwithstanding ought to be much more pleasing to us, than the daintiest Feast.

Let the memory of Gods divine presence be a strong bridle to our unruly appetite; let it also refrain us from all unfitting, and detracting discourses; for our corporal refection by this means may be made as profitable to the Soul, as it is necessary for the bodie; it being taken by us, not for pleasure, and delight; but only as the remedie which natural necessity requires at our hands, according to the will of God.

Be not too curious, singular, or hard to be pleased in your diet; since it little imports whether the sensual and greedy appetite be content or no, Moreover what good sign can it be, that

we truly love God, and are willing to suffer for his sake; if we cannot overcome our selves, and sensuality in so small a matter, as not to be able to endure some little unpleasing morsel of meat; which also being speedily to become so loathsome and foul an excrement? *what imports it (saith S. Hierome) of what matter it be made?* It was the saying of a holy man, to check thereby himself, when he found his tast disgusted with some ill relishing meat: *How must they be content (said he) who would be glad of a hard, and unsavoury crust of the coursest bread, for all their cheer: and thou art not content, nor grateful to God for such variety of good, and costly meat, which by the sweat of other mens brows is so plentifully prepared for thy Table?* Take thence occasion to confound your self thereat, and command that some part of it may, in satisfaction, be reserved for the poor and sick.

Call also to mind, that it is your mortal Enemy which you pamper; and therefore be very wary that you make him not too strong for you, by putting a dangerous weapon into his hand, whereby he may work your destruction. He is now your Slave, but will soon become your Master, if you pamper him too daintily. Satan having overthrown man and all his posterity by this temptation of gluttonie, he continues daily to assault us with the self same battery; he knowing well, that if he can get us once but to place our affection upon this excess of sensual Riot, he shall afterwards very easily divert us from all other chief occupations,

tions, which most concern the health of our Soul.

Ponder well at your meal (especially if at a Feast) how many pledges you have there of Gods fatherly bounty, goodnesse, and great love to you: they being as many, as there be severall dishes of meat upon the table; and how many harmlesse Creatures have lost their lives, that you might feed upon them. O suffer not at such a time, so gracious and loving a Lord to be offended, either by scurrility, detraction, surfeits, or by any kind of prophanenesse. Call often to mind what will shortly become of that frail flesh, which is now so daintily fed; when with Job, we shall say to corruption: *Thou art my Father; my Mother and Sister to worms.* Job 17:

Finally to avoid this dangerous excess by moderating the vicious sensuality of our unruly appetite, whereby we are so greatly prejudiced; we must make serious and frequent reflexions upon Gods Divine presence, which is a curb as well to our greedy appetite, as to our petulant tongue. We must eat with the motive for nourishing our bodie, to the end it may be enabled for the better service of God, by assisting our Soul in exercising her actions of Vertue: and above all, let our refection be taken in honour and homage of the refection which Jesus Christ here used upon Earth amongst men; that by the infinite merits thereof, ours may be so sanctified, as that we offend him not thereby: for by this means, and by a serious reflexion upon the premisses, our corporal nourishment

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will

will become pleasing to God, and meritorious of eternal reward.

You have heard what conditions are required for a vertuous conversation; as also what fitting comportment ought to be observed by us, as well at recreation in company, as at the table. It now yet remains that I also shew the defectiveness of several other parts of our Conversation; that by foreseeing the danger of their harm, we may avoid the prejudice which they do usually cause both in body and Soul.

Of this sort of vicious actions (proceeding from an ill regulated Conversation) are principally these; whereof (as most harmful) I intend briefly to speak: to wit, Detraction, Rash Judgment, Obloquie, Choler, Contention, Jeering, Prophane Mirth, vain singularity, vicious loquacity, and like offensiveness by the tongue. Of all which I will briefly treat in order.

First, earnestly wishing you to bear alwaies in mind, that the proper Antidote, and Sovereign cure generally of all these pestiferous Maladies to our Souls, is that Divine Charity; the nature and necessity whereof I have declared above, page 172.



*Of Detraction, Rash-Judgment and Obloquie; with Motives to avoid them in our Conversation.*

**D**etraction, and Obloquie, is when we speak ill of a person in his absence; thereby diminishing his reputation, and good opinion which had been formerly conceived of him by those, to whom the Detractor speaks. This is an usual vice in Conversation; yea, and even amongst people of piety, few are to be found who abstain from all discourse of other mens faults, as *S. Hier.* (writing to *Calantia*) hath well observed; and by most of the holy Fathers it is conceived that more Souls do perish by it, than by any other sin. *Granada* thinks that half the world are damned for it: and *S. Bernard* saith, that nothing doth administer so much fuel to the fire of Hell, as doth this wicked sin of Detraction; and of that kind the worst (as greatly hurtful and most dangerous) is, when to strike a deeper blow, and to detract with more force, a seeming fair and flattering preamble is made with deceitful shew of affection, and some praise of the person detracted; thereby as with a sweet, but venemous poison, to make way for a piercing sting of calumny; which by the Royal Prophet is most fitly expressed saying; *His words are made softer than oyl, and the same are most piercing.*

Pl. 54.

This



This way of defaming with a pious pretence, and without all shew of malice or ill-will, is of all the rest most pernicious; whilst professing love and commending the partie, he doth but imitate the Archer, who to let flie his Arrow at the mark with greater force, he draws it first so much the more towards his own Breast, and further from the mark. So do these dangerous Detractors; in the beginning they pretend love, esteem and affection, they much commend his good parts, condition and sufficiency; and that with much compassion, and meerly out of zeal and true desire both of Justice and Truth which obliges him without dissimulation to tell alwaies what is true: & by this string of dissimulation, he hailing the beginning, or head of the poisoned arrow of this his malicious discourse, first towards himself; he shoots at his Neighbours same with the sharp end in the conclusion, and leaveth him deadly wounded in honour, and himself in Soul, as also the other in giving ear if he be faulty in seconding it.

This Vice is most pernicious to all vertuous conversation, in that it is so opposite to Charity, which gives the life and true form to the same. That which makes this odious sin so common and very frequent, is the great corruption, and perversnesse of humane nature, inclining us more willingly to hear, and tell the imperfections of our Neighbour, than to praise in him what might be found right worthy for us to imitate: and like to importune and troublesome flies, we seek and take our chief content to fall, and feed upon the most corrupted sores, and

and look not for, nor do we regard the whole and sounder parts: which well declares the baseness of this Vice, inclining us so greedily to feed and to content our minds with so unworthy a subject, as is the very worst we can espie in others: whereas much better might be found, should not our sinful and detracting appetite so basely lead us to feed upon that sinful and uncharitable discourse of our Neighbours faults; wherein much calumny, and many injurious slanders fall not usually to augment that malicious sin: and though many are verie careful to flie most part of other great crimes; yet are they wholly insensible of any scruple in this, Most are too forward to say what they hear, or see; and others are as content to give both willing ear and countenance thereunto; but as the *Detraitor carrieth the Diuel in his mouth* (saith S. Bernard) *so he wh. harkeneth to it, carries him in his ear*: and therefore this holy Saint doth ingenuousslie confesse his ignorance to discern, which of the two committeth the greater sin; he who doth calumniate, or who giveth a willing ear unto the Calumny. Few rightly confesse this sin, or conceive true sorrow for it whereby to gain their pardon of God; and fewer make satisfaction to their Neighbour by repairing the wrong. This caused wise *Salomon* to cry out; *who will give a guard to my mouth, and a sure seal to my lips, that I fall not by them, and my tongue destroy me?* For Eccl. 22. the tongue of a Murmurer is worse than Hell, which only hurteth the wicked, and such as deserve it; but the tongue of a Murmur

murer hurteth as well the good, as the bad; yea, most spite it hath against the good and Vertuous.

The enormity of this sin is known by the greatness of the mischief which it procures to our neighbour; and the good whereof it deprives our selves may be the measure of the harm. Now as to the first, the reputation and good name, whereof the Detractor deprives his neighbour, surpasseth all worldly treasure, as the holy Ghost hath declared, bidding us to *have care of a good name; for this shall be more permanent to thee, than a thousand treasures, precious and great*: For to prejudice the good name and reputation of our neighbour, is a far greater wrong, than to take away his life, or goods; and consequently as we would not be accounted thieves, or murtherers, so we ought carefully to avoid this odious cryme, whereby we become both the one and the other in the highest degree; by robbing our neighbour of his good name (which surpasseth all worldly wealth) and by a double murther committed with one and the self-same act of Detraction: For thereby we both spiritually kill our own soul, and destroy the moral life also of our neighbours reputation, which is so very dear to him. And therefore without restitution of his honour (so unjustly prejudiced by Detraction) neither absolution, nor salvation can be expected; which is of all the greatest mischief to our selves.: And how hard a soar that is to heal, which is made by detraction, is sufficiently experienced by whosoever hath but ende-

devoured conscientiously to make that difficult cure in repaying so great a wrong.

But the Detractor will tell you, that it is no Calumny to report his crime which was sufficiently known to be true.

This is no excuse of his detraction; it being a great injustice, and breach of true charity, so rashly to accompt a man vicious, for his former offence; for he may be amended, and have obtained grace. Holy *Magdalen* had been a great sinner, and long continued in that unhappy state; but she was become the blessed favorite of *Jesus Christ*, when the rash judging Pharisee Luke 7. proclaimed her to be a sinful woman. The other was no less mistaken, when he made so uncharitable a judgement of that humble *Publican* in the Gospel; for he was then justified, though immediately before he had been a noted sinner. *Ananias* who esteemed *S. Paul* to be Luke 18. a fierce and cruel persecutor, was told from God, that he was then become a holy and chosen vessel of election. Acts 8.

By all which we are sufficiently advertised to take heed of rash judgement; and very carefully to abstain from detracting censures; for Mans will often changes; and as of a great Saint, one may become as great a sinner; so likewise the contrary may fall out. Moreover the great injustice of rash judgment is very manifest; for, *who art thou* (saith *S. Paul*) *that judgest another mans Servant? to his Master he stands or falls*: his Lord is to judge him, to whom he must render an accompt of his actions: and wherefore then presume we to usurp that

that office, which belongs only to him, before  
 Rom. 11. whose dreadful tribunal we all must ap-  
 pear.

True Christian Charity, as also the best se-  
 curity to our own souls, requires that we should  
 interpret our Neighbors actions in the most fa-  
 vourable sense. If they seem manifestly so bad,  
 as that they cannot be excused; yet we ought  
 to judge the best we can, at least of their inten-  
 tion. If that will admit no excuse; we must  
 then refer the judgement to God; leaving the  
 fault, as deserving compassion, as proceeding  
 from ignorance, frailty, or some other cause  
 deserving least blame, according to our Divine  
 example Jesus Christ, who for that he could  
 not wholly excuse that obstinate and wilful ma-  
 lice of the Jews in his sacred Passion; yet he di-  
 minished and excused it so far as it was possible,  
 by attributing their sacrilegious rage unto their  
 ignorance, *as not knowing what they did.*

Luke 23.  
 34.

It is also here to be observed; that though  
 the ill report of another may be true, yet if  
 the sin be secret, and unknown, it would be  
 great detraction to reveal it to them who did  
 not know it: for although the secret crime hath  
 wounded the sinners soul before God, yet it  
 hath not deprived him of his good name and  
 reputation in the opinion of Men.

It would be therefore much more Charity,  
 and to far better purpose, by due and orderly  
 fraternal correction) when occasion requires  
 it) to acquaint the offender in the spirit of le-  
 Gal. 6. 1. nity with his fault; and not by detraction in  
 absence, to hurt greatly both himself and his  
 Neighbour



Neighbor; and yet to cause no amendment thereby at all. O should we but love our Neighbour like our selves, and as Christ commands, undoubtedly we should not want excuses and sufficient ways to excuse their fault; for what shifts do we easily find out to excuse what we have done amiss? and how ingeniously do we defend our own fault, and find means, at least, much to lessen the same? The like we ought to do to our Neighbour, should we love him with true Christian Charity, as we are bound.

Be careful to permit no blaming discourses of such persons whom you least affect, or who have any wayes disoblighd you; for detraction will there easily slip in, whilst others by flattery speak ill of them, and you as well contented to give willing ear thereunto. In such occasions endeavor the best you can to turn by that discourse: considering that if for such little faults those persons are so much to be blamed; what then might we our selves deserve, if all the great crimes whereof God sees us guilty were laid open to Men? Let us elevate interiorly our hearts unto God, and crave humbly his grace for the amendment of our own great faults; which being so very many, we have small cause to busie our selves in looking after those of our Neighbour: and yet quite to the contrary, none usually look more narrowly into other mens faults and Lives, than they who make least accompt of their own; nor do any so severely examine the actions of others, as those who are most licentious, and



and have least care to amend what belongs to themselves. Be therefore very careful to avoid all detraction in your own discourse, and discreetly endeavour to prevent it in others; at least shew not your self well pleased thereat; remembering what the holy Proverb telleth us: *Prov. 15. that as wind from the North disperseth rain, so doth a displeased countenance retain a detraiding tongue*; but who willingly gives ear to the detractor, or by words or signs makes appear that he is well pleased therewithall, he encourageth the detractor, and makes himself guilty of the sin; yea, to detract, or to give ear to the Detractor; S. Bernard could not resolve which was the greater offence, and S. Thomas gives this good reason for it: because who hearkneth to the Detractor (saith he) co-operates to the sin, either directly by encouraging him thereby to it; or indirectly, by not hindring it so far as he was able.

But if the Detractor be of too great a quality to be contradicted; then shew, at least, no content in hearkning to the Detraction; but if you know any good of the detracted person, tell it there with confidence. Let the company of a Detractor be ever ungrateful unto you, who is rightly compared to the spider; whose labour and nourishment is only to engender poyson. They also resemble the common sink of the Town, which gathereth up all the filth, for they hearken after all Mens faults, to spread the ill favour of it to all who frequent their company; by which they become both pernicious and very odious unto all; yea, and most justly to be

be hated both of God and Man; and ought  
(saith S. Basil) to be chased from the conver-  
sation of Men. But, if finally you can find no  
other expedient, retire then your self discretely,  
and with the least offence you can from that  
company.

Avoid as much as may be all discourse about  
publick, and State affairs; experience suffici-  
ently teaching us, that through a seeming zeal  
of the common good, we are precipitately push-  
ed on to rash judgment, and beyond the due re-  
spect we owe to sovereign Powers, and to their  
chief Ministers; whom oftentimes we notori-  
ously injure; as also our own souls; and stand  
thereby engaged to much more satisfaction,  
than we can well conceive which way to requite.  
It would greatly avail us undoubtedly for a-  
voiding all uncharitable, and too forward cen-  
suring of others actions, to practise his Chri-  
stian like saying, who hearing a detracting cen-  
surer to condemn and greatly vilifie a certain  
Preacher for his small Talent therein; he thus  
very wise replied: for my part (saith he) I  
could not have done so well, and therefore I must not  
judge; nor much less condemn him. It was no  
lesse commendably said by him, who hearing  
one sharply to condemn another Mans sin; he  
both charitably, and truly reply'd: that were  
not for Gods holy grace, I should do much  
worse than he; and therefore much more  
cause have I (saith he) to bless God for  
his goodness to me, than to blame my Neighbour,  
who probably would have used that Divine grace  
much better; had it been given to him as it

next to me. This is a very singular good means,  
 not only to avoid the great sin of detraction  
 both in our selves and others; but also to come  
 off in the occasion with much edification and  
 merit: it being our securest practise to regard  
 what most concerns our selves; and to look di-  
 ligently to our own actions, without meddling  
 with what belongs to others: or if we perceive  
 in them to be amiss, what we by no means can  
 remedy, then only by an interior elevation of  
 heart, (according to the holy practise of a ve-  
 ry vertuous Person) let us say: *this concerns me  
 not, nor is it anything to me; it brings me neither  
 profit nor hurt, let me then not meddle therein, but  
 recommend all unto God.* O what disquiet and  
 vexation would this holy practise avoid? O  
 what rash judgments, and great sin of detra-  
 ction would it most happily prevent, should we  
 but faithfully practise this most laudable and  
 true Christian exercise? To which you may  
 also yet further adjoyn this profitable maxime,  
*to speake evil of none, but your self; neither bu-  
 sic your mind with other mens faults, but ra-  
 ther about the mending of your own; and if  
 by some detracting calumny you shall be inju-  
 red, I recommend to you the vertuous mode-  
 ration of that morally Divine Plato, well de-  
 serving to be imitated by any good Christian  
 herein: who once being told by his friend of a  
 notorious detracting calumny, whereby his En-  
 nemy had greatly prejudiced his good name, he  
 made this modest and very laudable reply:  
*I will endeavour to live in such sort (saith he) as the  
 World shall not believe that to be true which he hath  
 reported of me.**

The

The best remedies against this pernicious vice, are to make good reflection upon our own faults when we hear any to speak of the defects of others; which is the remedy which our Saviour gave to them who accused the Woman of Adultery.

2ly. To remember, that *charitas non cogitat malum*; and therefore neither can Charity speak ill of any; because our speech is but the production of our thought; and therefore if we think well of them, we shall also speak well of them.

The odiousness of this vice may be judged by Gods punishing it, *Numb. 12.* we read how *Mary* the Sister of *Moses* for detracting her Brother, was immediately all covered with a most foul and loathsome Leprosie; and *Exod. 21.* the Israelites for detracting *Moses*, God sent Serpents which devoured them. And for the same cause *Cora*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* were swallowed up alive by the Earth: and 250 of their complices were consumed by fire. And *Barron* to *5. an.* 177. assures us, that one *Domitius*, detracting *S. Ambrose* then dead, he was at the same instant strook with an Ulcer upon his tongue, whereof he soon after did dye.

Wherefore to conclude, if you hear any speak ill of their Neighbor, say with a holy man in the like occasion: *O, and how much are we bound to God for his Grace, if we be not much worse our selves: and therefore who well knows but himself, will never speak ill of another; but rather abhor all detraction; as an infectious*

tion. And for that this vice of Detraction proceeds but from a repining mind, at the esteem which is given to some other person; it will be but necessary here briefly to give you the Character.

### *Of the pernicious vice of Envy.*

**T**HE first and most inveterate vice in all this world, is envy; for it begun betwixt *Adam* and the infernal Serpent; betwixt *Abel* and *Cain*; *Jacob* and *Esau*; *Joseph* and his Brethren; *Saul* and *David*; *Job* and *Satan*. Their strife and envy was not about goods, and possessions, but out of meer envy and despise, grounded upon this wicked vice; and therefore of all others the worst, as being directly opposite unto charity, that principal vertue, whose nature is (according to *S. Paul*) to envy none; and therefore it is a vice above all others, most unworthy of a Christian, as being opposite to Charity, whereby we are bound to love our neighbour as our selves, by compassionating his harm, and by doing him what good we can. Envy is the proper vice of those condemned Spirits who so greatly maliced the Hypostatical union of the divine and humane nature for our Redemption; as they did also *Adams* happiness in *Paradise*, and the eternal bliss of his posterity. It was envy which moved wicked *Cain* to murder his innocent and holy Brother *Abel*: For *Cains* works were wicked, and therefore not regarded by God; as were the works of *Abel*, which

1 Cor.  
13

Gen. 4.  
1 Joan. 4  
12.



which were just, and obtained a blessing. It was the self-same vice which inflamed the Brethren of *Joseph* to execute their furious rage, and envious cruelty against him. And it most unjustly Dan 14. condemned *Daniel* to the Den of hungry Lions: 18. as also the Son of God *Jesus Christ* to that reproachful death upon the Cross. This vice was sharply reprehended by our blessed Redeemer in those envious workmen in his Vinyard, who grudging to see some others to be rewarded with equal pay to themselves, who had labored a lesser time; to whom he thus rarely reply'd: *in thine eye nought, because I am good?* It was the envy at their neighbours good, which made them to conceive it as a lessening and impairing of their own; which is the proper effect of this detestable vice: as are also the many other great mischiefs which ever accompany the same; for it killeth our soul by depriving it of grace, which is its spiritual life; it even gripes with an anxious vexation the heart wherein it is harbored, and oppresseth the same with deep sadness and melancholy; it putrifieth the bones (saith the holy Proverbs) it renders men ill thriving, consumptive, and lean. Finally, Hatred, Detraction, Backbiting, Slander, and endless quarrels are the daily effects of this wicked vice, and as the Symptoms of this evil disease, which according to *S. Basil*, is no ways better cured, than by despising what here the world doth most esteem: For we envy none for having what we regard with contempt. *S. Francis*, *S. Alexie*, *S. Margaret Queen of Hungary*, and many more such like devout, holy, and



humble persons, who despised the wealth, the pleasures, and honours of this world, did not ways envy such, as most abounded with them, because they truly contemning all such deluding vanities; how could they envy those who most enjoyed them? Themselves desiring, and laboring to obtain that only true happiness which is both heavenly and eternal.

I cannot propose to you a better expedient for conquering this wicked vice, than by a serious consideration of *S. Paul's* comparing all Christian brethren (compleating the mystical body of Christ) to the members composing our natural body; which strive for the conservation of their fellow members of the self-same body. And thence it is, that when any one of them suffers, they likewise all suffer with it; and whilst one receives some particular ease, they all take joy and great content therein: They neither repair nor repine at any advantage, or employment of the one above the other; nor bear they any grudge or envy therefore betwixt themselves: the meanest member is not jealous of the chiefest, but assists and contributes all it can unto the happiness of the other. *Let not therefore a Christian (saith S: Augustin)* seek in the mystical body of Christ (whereof he is a part) to be a heigh and principal member; but to be sound, and in perfect health, by Charity, which suppresseth all repining envy at my neighbours prosperity; For, Charity envieth not; it is not ambitious; it thinketh not evil; but rejoiceth at anothers good; attributing it to their better deserving than their own, and praiseth God for all: and there-

therefore as Charicy is the Sovereign cure of  
this detestable vice of Envy; so likewise it cuts  
off the sinful branches which spring from the self  
same root; which are described, as here it fol-  
loweth by the names

*Of Jeering, Scoffing, and prophane  
Discourse.*

**T**H E next near adjoyning vicious branch to  
Detraction and Rash-judgement, is Jeer-  
ing, Scoffing, and prophane Discourse; which  
being so common, and very hurtful to all hu-  
mane Conversation, I will endeavour briefly to  
give you here a character of this vice; whereby  
beholding it's sinful deformity, you may the  
more be moved to detest the same.

And for the better understanding hereof, it  
is to be observed, that there be two sorts of  
evil Jestors, or Jeerers. The first are such as  
Mock and Scoff at holy things, and make but a  
jest of our Faith and Religion, of Sacraments,  
Ceremonies, and Preaching, &c. Yea they pro-  
phane sport, and make Mirth with the sacred  
scripture it self. Of these the Prophet Hieremy  
much complained saying: that *the word of God*  
*(which he preached)* *was made but a jest and* ch. 20  
*laughing.* Of this sort are such, as Jeering, and  
laughing will say: *God is an honest good Man,*  
*and will not be so hard to please. The Devil is not*  
*so black, as they paint him. Heaven is great,*  
*there will be place enough for us all. In Hell there*  
*wants not store of good fellows; and we shall do there*  
*as well as the rest.* These and such like Sacrilegious

cap. 1.

pro. 1.

26.

Scoffs and Mocks are most odious to God (saith the holy Proverb) and his many dreadful punishments, as likewise his angry threats to decide them also at the dreadful hour of their death, ought to be sufficient warning for their speedy amendment. As may be seen in this sad example (well deserving a flood of bitter tears) related by Doctor Sanders in his Schism of England concerning King Henry the Eighth; where he attributes the deplorable destruction of Catholick Religion (as a main cause amongst the rest) to those prophane and Sacrilegious Scoffings, and blasphemous jeasts of Sir Francis Bryan, the Kings bosome friend, and of the Bullins race; who thus, in nature of a pleasant scoffing jeaster, labored to please the Kings Licentious and Luxurious humour, by pernicious Scoffs and Jeers at all things which were sacred in the Church. One amongst many others (and not the least for impiety) was this; when being demanded by the wanton King, what manner of sin it was to lye with the daughter, after he had abused the mother? It was just the same (quoth this impious Bryan) as first having eaten of the hen, to feed afterwards upon her chicken, at which the King very loudly laughing: *ba Bryan* (said he) and art thou not rightly indeed my Infernal Vicar? (for so his accustomed blasphemous jeasting to the King, had given him generally that name) and after this he was commonly called by all, the Kings Vicar of Hell.

By

By these sacrilegious and pernicious jeers;  
 he so fed the Kings vicious humour, as he al-  
 so freed his libidinous, and sinful mind from  
 all remorse; so that by little and little, his vo-  
 cupuous heart became void of all scruple for  
 his most horrid sacrileges, which this irreligi-  
 ous Sychophant, by his deriding scoffs, had  
 made now to seem ridiculous to the King;  
 though we have felt their sad effects, and have  
 had leisure above sixscore years to deplore them;  
 and the unfortunate King much more, who  
 being come to the very point of his unhappy  
 death, he called for a cup of white wine, and  
 taking his last farewell of that his most im-  
 pious favourite, he dolefully pronounced (saith  
 Dr. Sanders in his Schism of England) those de-  
 spairing words: *O Bryan, all is lost*; and as our  
 histories of his unhappy life do generally re-  
 compe; that he being exhorted by some to  
 raise up his Soul to more confidence in the  
 great mercy and goodnesse of God, *And*, (saith  
 he) *I who never spared Man in my anger, nor  
 woman in my lust, what hope of mercy for me? and  
 dying, hath left thereby for our instruction  
 sufficient warning against scoffing and  
 all manner of sacrilegious jesting at holy  
 things.*

The other sort of evil Jestlers, are such as scoff,  
 & jeer at the defects of other men, as did those  
 ingracious Children at the Prophet *Elihu* for  
 his bald head, whom God presently revenged  
 with wild Bears, by whom they were all de-  
 voured. This scoffing and jeering is very usual  
 in natural defects; as at want of wit, want of  
 comeliness,

comeliness, of Riches, or some corporal sense.

Others much more sinfully mock at devotion and virtue, calling piety, hypocrisie; patience, simplicity and lowliness; a good Conscience, they call scrupulosity; affability, silliness; modesty, stupidity; and finally there is no virtue which hath not by them its taunt and jeer: for the simplicity of the just man is scorned, (saith Job) but see them by way in good time, and not be deceived, for Gal. 6.7. God will not be long mocked by them. And Mirabel experienced her just punishment, by a perpetual disgrace of sterility, for jeering and deriding that holy King; when she beheld him in great humility meekly clothed, dancing 2 King. 6. and playing Musick upon a Harp before the Ark of God. But some will tell you that they mean no harm; it being only for merriment sake; yet such laughter is not to be approved, since it but resembles that of Apes, who seem most to laugh when they are readiest to bite. Yea, such laughter is oftentimes much more pernicious than the greatest injuries; and the damnation of those jeering scoffers at virtue, is undoubtedly very great; for they draw multitudes from their pious purposes & good life, by reason of their quips & jeers, which oftentimes have more force amongst young people, than the greatest Persecution would have had; they much more fearing to be confounded by those jeering wits, than to suffer torments at a Tyrants hand; and thus these impious scoffers, both neglecting all virtue themselves and deriding



ing also all others from the practise thereof, are doubly guilty of a great crime. We must not therefore mock, nor gybe at any person whatsoever; for it is but great simplicity (saith the holy Bishop of Geneva) if we think we may mock or scoff at any who will not hate us for it. St. Tho. of Aquine being asked what was the best mark whereby to know a right vertuous and spiritual man? If you observe (answered he) a man much given to jeering and gybing in discourse, and to take pleasure in silly and childish sopperies, quibling in words, or levity, or affecting ridiculousnesse in behaviour; esteeme him no spiritual person (saith St. Tho.) although he should do miracles: because (saith he) his vertue is without connexion, he being seemingly serious at some exercise of Piety, and yet so light and defective soon after in other occasions.

The precedent discourses of Detraction, prophane talk, jeering, and scoffing, do sufficiently manifest those great abuses in Conversation to proceed principally from the ill government of our tongue. And because there are yet severall others of the self same nature, whereof I am to speak; it will be most proper in the next place to represent to you in particular the great harm of *Loquacity*; that by beholding the great mischief thereof, we may by due moderation of our tongue, endeavour as well to remedy those abuses, whereof I have already spoken: as also to prevent the others, whereof I am to treat in this next following discourse.



*Of vicious Loquacity, and the much  
harm caused by the ill government of  
our Tongue.*

**L**oquacity proceeds usually from presumption; whereby perswading our selves to know much, and being greatly pleased in that fancy, we would have others to be so perswaded by our abundant talk; as if by barking thereunto they might be taught and learn what they knew not before. The great mischief and many dangerous evils which proceed from this pernicious vice, are to be seen at large in the third chapter of *S. James*. And to prevent them, the holy Ghost in many places of the sacred Scripture exhorts to have a special watch and guard over our tongue: for he that well governeth his mouth, keepeth his Soul; but who is unadvised to speak, shall feel evils. And therefore divine Wisdom exhorts us to shut up our mouth both with lock and door; and a little after: use a ballance for thy words, and a bridle and caution to thy mouth: counselling us to speak nothing but what is first well pondered and considered before: and according to wise *Solon* his advise, our judgment must precede our tongue. No savage nor enraged Beast can be so cruelly mischievous, as is an ill ruled tongue; for they can only tear in pieces, and destroy the body; but an unbridled tongue assaults the soul, and deprives it self of the Life of Grace, by the mortal

*Prov. 13.*

*Ec. 28. 29*

mortal wound of sin. The Royal Prophet well sheweth his great fear of this cruel Beasts breaking loose, when he said: *set O Lord a watch to my mouth, and a doer round about my lips: for a man full of tongue, shall not be directed in the Earth:* Ps. 140:3  
Ps. 139-1  
because being subject thereby to flatter, to lye, to detraction, and quarrels; he must needs be most unhappy in this life, and become odious both to the good and bad; *we must therefore be swift to hear, but slow to speak;* for in much talk James 19. sin cannot be wanting. And what necessity there is of shutting up and close keeping in this unruly rebel, the great Author of nature, God himself hath sufficiently admonished us by inclosing it within a double fence, of teeth and lips; which also are most usually to be shut, who likewise having given to us two eyes, two ears, two hands, and but one only tongue, doth sufficiently instruct us thereby, that we ought to speak but little, and to hear and see, and do far more; and therefore the Wise man was anciently called a man of four ears, signifying, that he hearkned much, and spake very little; which is a quality observed in the wisest Men: as on the contrary, experience makes it manifest; that who so abound in words, are ever most barren in wisdom; and like Trees which produce most leaves, they have usually but little Fruit. So Children and simple people do talk and prattle most, because they want judgment and reason whereby to rule and moderate their tongue; which the wiser sort enjoying, they are much more silent; for the prudent Man before he speaks considers many things,  
(saith

(saith S. Ambrose) as first, that which he is to say, and to whom he speaketh, and to what end; for herein it is that the holy Ghost hath put the difference betwixt the wise Man, and a fool, that a fool saith all which comes to his mind, but a wise man speaks only what he hath well considered; and most undoubtedly, who first well considers what he is to say, will find it oftentimes more fit to hold his peace; for silence seldom hurts, but much speaking is rarely without sin, who therefore are truly wise take much more content in hearkning to others, than in speaking themselves; for by hearing others, is gained knowledge, and wisdom; but much talking is followed by repentance. The reason is evident; for who speaks very much, he considers and ponders but little, and therefore must needs commit many errors by talking; for which reason we are assured by the holy Proverb; that *who soeill moderates his tongue, is most wise: and who offendeth not by his tongue, is a most perfect man*, saith S. James. Finally, it is the spirit of all truth which tells us (and experience doth manifest it to be true) that *where there is much talk, there is ever scarcity and barrenness*, (he means both of judgement and wit) and yet vanity and desire of esteem, still itching at the tip of the tongue, requires much force and violence to contain it within due moderation, which gave Solomon just cause to say: that *mans greatest labour was in the mouth*; because his greatest difficulty is to govern his tongue. Socrates allows two only seasons wherein it is proper to speak: the one when

when we speak that which we well understand;  
 the other, when it is needful, or very conveni-  
 ent to speak; and that at all other times it ar-  
 gues wisdom to be silent, and it shews want  
 hereof, to be forward in talk. For when we  
 find a Coffer without a lock, it is a great pre-  
 sumption that it hath no Treasure within. Yea,  
 empty Vessels, and shallow Rivers make ever  
 the greatest noise: as also loud speech and ve-  
 nemency in discourses are but tokens of pre-  
 sumption, and of much inward Pride and va-  
 nity. For as the hand sheweth the good, or bad  
 order of the Clock (saith *Philon*) so doth the  
 tongue declare the disposition of the heart, out  
 of the abundance whereof the tongue doth  
 speak, saith our Saviour himself: for the tongue  
 is the true interpreter whereby the heart is to  
 be understood. Math. 12.  
34.

By all which it remains manifest how great-  
 ly it imports us to govern carefully our tongue,  
 divine wisdom assuring us that both *life and*  
*death are in the power of the tongue*: that is, our  
 salvation and damnation (saith *S. John Chrysost*)  
 depend thereupon. Wherefore several of the  
 ancient Saints considering well the great peril  
 of sinning by the tongue; they have spent  
 their whole lives in labouring to govern that  
 dangerous and unruly instrument; the right  
 ordering whereof imports our humane actions  
 no lesse, than right ruling the Stern, doth a  
 Ship, which though but small in bulk, yet as  
 the skilful Pilot guides by it the greatest Vessel  
 through the most boisterous storm, so likewise a  
 prudent and vertuous man, by reason and the  
 fear

feare of God ( keeping a strong Guard upon his tongue ) preserves his soul from danger of being Shipwrackt by sin, in the fury of unquiet passions, raised by injuries, or by any cross encounter whatsoever.

Now to shew the great esteem which ancient Saints did make of this holy practise of silence and right moderation of the tongue ; it is not unworthy of this place to let you know what Nicephorus relates of a great Doctor, who coming to visit S. Pombo, a holy Abbot, but not much learned ; who perswading him to joyn Learning to his vertue ; the holy Abbot seemed very content : whereat the Doctor opening his Bible, he begun to expound the first place which occurred, Psal. 38. *I will keep my wayes, that I offend not in my tongue : stay,* ( quoth the holy man ) *that is now enough, you may teach me the rest after I shall have well learned and practised this important point :* thereby giving to understand that the first, and principal point of a true spiritual life ; is to restrain, and to well govern the tongue.

You have now seen part of the bad effects proceeding from vicious loquacity ; to which many more might be adjoyned, which experience teacheth them to their cost, who are much given to this great defect in their Conversation. I will now go on to give you also warning of another most dangerous ill effect, proceeding from the same ill government of the tongue, ( as instrument of the sinful heart ) and is so much, by far, a more grievous crime ; in that, as the other before related ill effects of a bad tongue,



tongue, and only against our Neighbour; but this dishonours God himself immediately, by transgressing his second Commandment by the most wicked vice

*Of Swearing and detestable Blasphemy.*

**A**S God by his first Commandment forbids all Idolatry, and that we acknowledge nor, nor adore with Sovereign honour, any Creature whatsoever but himself alone: so in this his second Precept he commands us that we take not his Name in vain; whereby we are forbid all unlawful swearing, and wicked Blasphemy: Let your talk be yea, yea; no, no; and that which is ever and aboves is of the evil, (saith Jesus Christ) and from our ghostly Enemy. This Precept is understood to be against all unnecessary and unlawful swearing; for God himself by his Prophet Hieremy allows such swearing, as is accompanied with Truth, Judgment, and Justice, or as some others expresse it to the same effect, with Truth, Reverence, and Necessity, for if any of these conditions be wanting, the Oath will be sinful and naughty. We must therefore first know the thing to be true which we swear. 2ly. We must judge it necessary to call God as witness to make it be believed. And 3ly. that it be a thing both just and very lawful. For as God is honoured by an Oath made with these due circumstances, because we professe thereby, that he seeth and knoweth all things, and is the sovereign Truth, and Main-  
cherished
taines



tainer thereof; so by the contrary he is greatly dishonoured when an Oath is rashly made, and without the mentioned conditions; because by so swearing, one seems to make God either ignorant of what he swears; or a maintainer of their impious falsity. To swear then with *truth*, it is necessary that we affirm nothing with an Oath but what certainly we know to be true; nor that we promise, but what we undoubtedly intend to perform; for otherwise our Oath would be false, and but a perjury.

To swear with *Justice and Reverence*; it is required that we promise not by Oath to do any thing which is unlawful; and therefore they sin grievously who promise with an Oath to revenge their injuries, or to do any thing which displeaseth God, nor ought they to observe such promises; for nothing can bind us to do evil, and which is against the Law of God. Or finally, to swear with *Judgment and Necessity*, it is required that we swear advisedly, and with due maturity, considering as a most undecent thing to call God unto witness, but only in a just and very needful occasion, and of great importance; and that also with much reverence and fear. They therefore much offend who for every trifle, yea, playing and jesting do most irreverently abuse, and rashly take Gods name in vain. And by that frequent use of swearing, they fall easily into perjury.

We must therefore be careful to swear but very seldom, and then also with due conditions required. For Oaths being permitted but only for the remedie and weaknesse of mans credit, because

because we can hardly believe one another; therefore an Oath is to be used but as a medicine, which is not taken frequently, but seldom, and as necessity may justly require. And therefore the wise man gives us warning, that we accustom not our selves to swearing, for from thence (saith he) great mischief proceeds; and presently after he adds: that a great swearer shall abound with sin, and his House shall not be free from affliction. Ec. 23. 9.

The great enormity of this accustomed sin may be easily conceived, if we but consider how highly it would offend some noble person, should but his Scullion or some mean Lackey, so abuse his Name, as to produce it in every idle and frivolous foolish jest, or song; or to give it as a nick-name to a dog, or any other sporting manner; which should his Master himself but either over-hear or see; O what revenge would he take of so base a servant for so exorbitant an injury! And must then that most August and dreadful name of God, which makes the Heavens to shake, which the Angels adore, and the Devils do fear and dread; shall that sacred name be so despised, derided, and so sacrilegiously abused by all sorts of people, and be made in all manner of discourse and encounters the expression both of their mirth, and anger; and as but the burthen of a song, and seasoning of all their prophane actions and merriments, by them most unworthy, filthy, and vile worms, and worse than nothing, against their sovereign Lord, their Creator, Preserver, and Judge; who hath the power not only to strike

their bodies with a sudden temporal death, but also to cast them immediately both body and soul into the eternal flames of Hell for their most insolent contempt of his Divine and dreadful Majesty, and most execrable sins which all Nations, yea, and such as otherwise are most Barbarous, yet ever have held in great horror and detestation this execrable crime of Swearing, Perjury, and Blasphemy, as all Histories do plainly testifie. The Egyptians and Scythians put Perjurous People to death without remission. The Indians cut off the extremities both of their fingers and toes. According to the Civil Law, all Perjurous Persons are infamous, nor can they be admitted as witnesses. *S. Lewis King of France* ordered by express Law, that their tongues should be pierced with a hot Iron. By all which it sufficiently appears, as well amongst the Infidel Pagans, as amongst all Christian People, in what horror and detestation this most abominable vice hath ever been held.

But some perchance will tell you, that they well know this crime to be both dangerous and detestable; yet after the great impression which so long an habitual custom hath made, it is very hard, yea, and almost impossible to refrain. To such as use no industry to resist their evil habit, that is most true. But hearken to *S. Augustine*, and learn your curst imitate his happy example, and it will not be hard. *Be bold (saith he) I live and converse amongst you, and who of you ever heard me to swear? though formerly nothing was to me usually more familiar*

12. 23. 23

Joan. Bo.  
em. in de-  
scrip. E-  
gypt.  
Covar. in  
Ca.  
quamvis  
passum.  
p. 7. Sect.  
7. 2.  
C. nfa-  
mes. 6. q.  
1.

Serm. 10.  
de san-  
ctis.

than to sweat: I humbly having reflected, and most  
 dread very seriously with my selfe how great a crime  
 it was, and exceeding dangerous it began to fear  
 it, and earnestly to strive against that perverſe  
 and wicked habit, with recourse unto God by holy  
 Prayer, and thereby I obtained his Heavenly grace  
 so far as we man's nor is any thing more easy  
 unto me than to refrain the same thing. I do tell you  
 (saith S. Augustin): to the end you may see that it  
 is not so hard or impossible a thing, how great sweat  
 and paine it is to amend this most wicked sin. If  
 that the love of God, or the desire of their eter-  
 nall Beatitude, or finally the fear of the endless  
 damning flames of Hell have any power with  
 them, to apply in good time this sovereign remedy.  
 Thus that most blessed Saint and great Doctor  
 of the Church, so worthy an example for all  
 to imitate.

### Of Blasphemy.

Although the wicked sin of Swearing and  
 Perjury be very great, yet Blasphemy ex-  
 ceeds it, and is far more execrable in the sight  
 of God: as being an irreverent and contumel-  
 ious outrage by speech, thought, or writing, a-  
 gainst himself, or his blessed Saincs, as to say  
 by the heere, or head, &c. of God. As true as God  
 God hath no care or providence of me. God seeth  
 me not: and the like. And generally to attri-  
 bute to God, either what agreeeth not to him,  
 or to deny what properly doth belong to him;  
 or finally to name the same irreverently, in

jeast or mockery; all which sinful Blasphemy, is mortal sin, from which no lightnesse of the matter can excuse it; the nature of this wicked sin being of it self grievous and mortal, because it strikes immediately more at the proper person of God himself, than at his Creatures; as by the other sins of Theft, Murder, Adultery, &c. it well appears. And therefore Blasphemy

Apoc. 16.

11.

S. Anto-

nin. 3.

part.

Chron.

11. 19. c.

9. Sect. 4.

Paul. E.

milim

bist.

Fran. 1. 7.

H. Bost.

W. 1. 10.

"

is justly called by S. *John*; the proper sin of the damned. And great reason had *Justinian* the Emperor, by his Law, to condemn the Blasphemer to death; and he gave this good reason for it; because by Blasphemy, and such like wicked sins, (saith he) God doth punish the World with Famine, Earthquakes, and Plague, &c. *S. Leva* made them to be marked in the forehead with a hoe Iron as Slaves, and also to bore their tongues through with it. *Kennethus* King of Scotland, by Law made that their tongues should be quite cut out. *Charles* the fifth, that they should be punished by death; or by losse of some member of their body, according to condition and person. And such as should swear, by the Body, by the Head, Wounds, Blood, Death, Passion, Torments, or Sacraments of God; that they should be put in Prison, and most severely punished.

Levit.

24. 11.

S. Greg. 1.

4. dial. c.

28.

"

In *Levit.* God commanded that the Blasphemer should be stoned to death. *S. Gregory* assures us that a Child but five years old, for blaspheming God, was snatcht violently out of his Fathers arms by the Devil, and so carried away, never afterwards seen.

And



And the like hapned to another at 12 years  
age, as S. Hieron. doth report. *S. Crisostom  
epist. de  
mirac. S.  
Hier.  
Et inter  
Epist. S.  
Aug  
Epist. 206*

To these pernicious sins of the tongue I might  
here also add the great sin of Malediction, In-  
precation, and cursing. But to avoid prolixi-  
ty, I will only put you in mind, of the Royal  
Prophets advertisement, which may well deter  
us from wishing, death, plague, the Devil to  
strike, or to take such as cause us some sudden  
anger or discontent; which yet upon slight oc-  
casion we so frequently wish unto others, yea,  
sometimes to our own selves, little reflecting  
how greatly we offend God thereby, and ex-  
pose our selves and others, in due punishment,  
to be struck with that sinful curse, for *dilexit  
maledictionem, & eveniet ei. He loved malediction,  
and it befell him.* But I will stay no longer  
upon this point, there yet remaining several o-  
ther sinful and ungrateful Vices, proceeding  
from the same ill government of an unruly  
tongue; which I will here next propose to you  
under the notions

*Of Boasting, Ostentation, and  
vain glory.*

**S**ELF praise is the daughter of vain glory, and  
Grandechild of Pride; it is condemned fre-  
quently in the persons of those Pharisees by  
our blessed Saviour himself; you are they that  
justify your selves, and set forth your own  
praise before men, than which kind of com-  
mendations, nothing is more odious or con-  
temptible, holy wisdom doth counsel us,



Prov. 27. *let another praise thee, and not thy own mouth.*

And truly nothing is more odious than a vain bragging boaster of his own worth and actions; who though he seeks honour and esteem thereby, yet usually he purchases but scorn and contempt. Quarrels and many other great mischiefs do commonly accompany a vain bragging and boasting proud humour, which is odious to God and man; and proceeding from an inward pride; must needs be greatly prejudicial to our souls; as being directly opposite to Humility, which is the foundation of all true vertue.

Eccles.  
10.

1. Tim. 1.

2. Cor. 10.

Luke 18.

I deny not but that worth, good works, and true merit will deserve to be praised, yet so, as who enjoys the gift, ought to give the whole glory to God, who is both the Author and owner. And therefore it is sinful to glory in any thing as our own; for it is not he who praises himself, that is approved, but whom God doth commend; yea none are less vertuous, than such as desire most to be so esteemed. This sinful folly of vain glory and self esteem, is sufficiently decry'd in the example of that boasting Pharisee in the Gospel; who presumptuously glorying in his own good works, and rashly censuring and despising his poor neighbour, was most justly condemned by Jesus Christ, himself, whilst that humble Publican by the repentent acknowledgement of his sin, was justified in the self-same time and place.

It is also to be observed, that ordinarily (as in the former example appears) the greatest vaunters are usually despisers of all other men; whereby

whereby they raise incensed Enemies, who both  
contemn and laugh them to scorn: Whereas if  
by humble modesty they would refrain their  
vaunting brags of the good gifts which they  
sometimes enjoy above other men; their abili-  
ties and good deeds would be highly commen-  
ded; and themselves much honoured for the  
same. For experience makes it manifest, that  
the humble minded man, whilst he thinks bet-  
ter of all others, than of himself, he will be  
both loved and esteemed by all: But the proud  
Man preferring himself, and his own worth be-  
fore all others, he will be hated and contem-  
ned by every one. The best means therefore to  
obtain true honour and esteem, is to purchase  
them by humility and good works, as Christ  
himself hath taught us: *Let my works be judge*  
*(saith he) the works which I do, sufficiently give*  
*testimony of me. Nor boast ye (said our Sa-*  
*viour to the proud Jews) in that you are chil-*  
*dren of Abraham; but let your glory be to imitate*  
*his good works; lest proving degenerate children*  
*of so noble a Parent, instead of the glory you*  
*seek, you find confusion: for true merit will*  
*never want praise; but all Pride is dispised as*  
*the true mother of sin. In fine, the best cure of*  
*this dangerous disease of vain self esteem, is to*  
*give all glory to God, neglecting with despise,*  
*as well the praise, as the blame of Men; if be-*  
*ing usually most unjust, false, and deceitful:*  
*they frequently blaming what they ought to*  
*praise, and praise what they ought to blame:*  
*they call evil good (saith the Prophet) and good*  
*evil, Darkness, Light, and Light, Darkness: putting*  
*bitter*

Joan 8.

Isa. 5. 20.

bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter, for which he gives them a fearful woe. And the true reason of all this is, because they are ignorant of the right ground of just praise, which is virtue and true purity of intention, which lie hid and unknown unto them.

To conclude, this odious boasting and sinful vain glory is the eldest daughter of Pride, and encreases her wicked race by producing that common and pernicious vice in Conversation, whereof I will now next treat, by the name

### *Of Contention and Debate.*

**C**ontention, Contradiction, and Debate, being so very obvious in our Discourse and Conversation; and for that usually they greatly weaken both Friendship and true Charity, these following advertisements are here proposed for the better preventing of so harmful an evil.

And to this end, it may first be observed as a good mark and sure sign which wise Solomon gives us whereby to know a wise man from a fool; that a fool will engage himself in many quarrels, and provoke also others to the same; but the wise man, on the contrary, appeaseth them by meek and gentle words. S. Augustine doth most lively expresse this meer frivolous verbal encounter, and obstinate contestation in dispute, saying: *To contest in words, is not to regard so much how error may be discovered by truth, but rather how thy own opinion and saying* may

may be preferred before that of another person. This is condemned by the great Apostle, telling us that the servant of our Lord must not wrangle, but be mild towards all men, docile and patient: contend not in words (saith he) for that serveth for nothing but to scandalize the hearers. To grow hot with contention about trifles, savours much of great Childishnesse, saith Saint Augustine.

2 Tim. a.

S. Thomas of Aquino in his School disputes was observed never contentiously to contradict, but with admirable mildnesse, and moderation of words he declared his opinion without any shew of the least dis-esteem of any; but contrariwise with great respect and esteem of all, for he pretended not to get the better by dispute, but only to make truth to appear.

The means to avoid this contentious debate; is, first to observe, that it is directly contrary to the very end it self of all good conversation, which ought to nourish true friendship, and mutual amity for the more solace and comfort of each other, amongst the many tedious troubles of this present life. Whereas quite to the contrary, by those wrangling contentions and ungrateful debates, many offensive words, and injurious taunts, yea, affronts with much contempt and despising expressions are often uttered, with no small sign of aversion and ill-will; whereby both love and friendship is greatly weakened, which should have been increased and confirmed by company and conversation. S. Pauls earnest dissuasion of all Christians from this pernicious vice, and spirit

of

of contention is of great force and efficacy. *Phil. 2.* There be any consolation in Christ: (saith he) if we accomplish ye my joy by your agreement with one another in love, mutual Charity, and consent, nothing for vanity; but esteeming and preferring in true humility others before your selves, regard not so much your own content and interest, as the good and fitting satisfaction of your Neighbour. Thus the blessed Apostle; in which words are contained a most sovereign Antidote against all contentious debate, and which is able to give a perfect cure to that ingrateful spirit, if we obtain but grace to make happy use thereof. *It is also to be observed,* that it is a great Victory, to permit our selves to be overcome in this contentious combat of wrangling words, it being the game of *Gana-pirad*, wherein the winner must lose. Nor ought we to think it dishonour to yield to a contentious man, since we are assured by the Holy Ghost, that it is honour to flee contention; and wear void thereby, both much scandal and sin. *Yea* *Prov. 20.* *Eccl. 28:* *2 Tim: 2:* *a mans wisdom is known by his patience,* (saith the Holy Proverb.) And the servant of our Lord must be mild towards all. If you knock two earthen pots one against the other, you undoubtedly will break them both; but strike them against wool, or any soft yielding substance, and neither of them will receive any harm: so to a meek and patient man, harsh or cholerick speeches will make no breach nor quarrel; for the one yielding, the other will be confounded or at the least appeased; and most unfortunate

truly



truly in that victory; (saith St. Bernard) wherein  
 triumphing over men, thou sinkest under, and yieldest  
 to vice. Be not forward to contradict another person  
 in discourse; (especially in matters of small im-  
 portance) to shew your own knowledge there-  
 by; and if you be contradicted by others, in  
 the like occasion, grow not angry thereat; but  
 only modestly and mildly make answer, that so  
 is your opinion, it being lesse harm to be esteem-  
 ed modestly humble, rather than obstinately  
 proud.

Not do you ever adhere too stiffly to your own  
 sense or proper judgement, but yielding rather  
 easily to others (when evident reason doth not  
 contradict it) before your own; and be glad to  
 learn of all the world. Let Charity be there pre-  
 fer'd before all frivolous disputes, and a holy a-  
 mity with your Neighbor, before so vain a satis-  
 faction, as is in seeking by too earnest contesta-  
 tion to gain a frivolous advantage, and that  
 also with prejudice to your soul. For who ob-  
 stinately maintains his own opinion, shews  
 plainly that he prefers his judgement, and  
 reason before that of others, which favours  
 of much Pride, and self-esteem. But when  
 just occasion requires that you should oppose  
 the opinion of another, be then very wary that  
 it be not with any presumption or heat; but  
 having mildly proposed your reasons, then mo-  
 destly desist in all friendly affection; and ra-  
 ther framing your discourse in favour of your  
 opposer, taking all in good part; and so far  
 only arguing the matter in all quiet temper, as  
 that



that without offence, the truth may thereby appear. Be exceeding wary that no passion or earnestnesse in discourse move you to any choicerick expressions, or injurious words; for besides the offence to God, you will thereby weaken your own reputation, it being generally esteemed much weaknesse of judgement, and want of good reason, to defend a cause by passion and offensive language; whereas one only good reason alledged, is of much more force with a prudent man, than a thousand sharp biting or injurious words.

Finally, let your mind be never troubled nor disquieted for any contradiction which shall be framed against your discourse; for such trouble, and disquiet would manifest the good opinion you conceive of your self; as if (forsooth) all your sayings were to be received as Oracles, and to be contradicted by none. True Humility would soon correct this odious vice of self esteem; and preventing all sinful contention, it would render our Conversation meritorious, and very grateful both to God and man.

You have seen sufficient motives to hate all Contention and Debate, and carefully to avoid the same in your conversation. The ensuing discourse will shew what evil fruit proceeds from that pernicious root, which begets in our souls the dangerous and brutal vice

of  
 of

## Of Anger and Choler.

**C**holer is a proper and principal production of Pride, and so pernicious a Passion, as the very best of our actions are much endangered to be viciated and quite spoiled thereby; since it not only deprives them of merit, but renders them very sinful, and ungrateful to all: yea, the Holy Ghost by the mouth of S. James, Chap. i. doth assure us, that *ira enim auri, iustitiam Dei non operatur*, a man in choler doth never a laudable action, it going beyond the limits of prudence and reason. Yea, it often dischargeth its rage even upon innocent brute Beasts; yea, upon insensible things, as a door, a table, on stools, &c. which comes next in the way, he curseth and overthroweth all to spite thereby his Enemy, and to content that brutal passion, and whilst he thinks to be revenged of another, he doth by exceeding folly, much prejudice himself both in body and soul.

And daily experience makes it manifest, that in choler no action is laudable; for who corrects his Child in anger, will exceed the due limits of discretion; and to correct a Servant in that intemperate passion, (yea, though for a very just cause) is but to cast a reproach upon him, and to provoke him to further disobedience. The same is to be said of all his other actions whatsoever; this unbridled humor corrupting and rendring them ungrateful to every one; and this brutal passion sometimes possesses the

the mind so entirely, as what is impious and outrageous in it self, being beheld (saith S. Gregory) with these false spectacles of an enflamed anger, appears to be just and reasonable.

But the true folly of this ill governed passion is soon discovered, and brings much repentance for the great harm which it causeth both to body and soul. For Servants not long able to endure so outrageous an humor in a Master, they depart and leave him alone. Children become dull, stupid, and neglectful of such a Father. The comfortlesse poor Wife is bedewed with perpetual tears. All friends abandon such persons, since they are no more sociable; neither is there more contentment to be found in their Conversation, than in that of savage Beasts. The violence of this dangerous passion is so great, as it frequently breaks out into strange effects, which are as the symptoms of it. Behold a person in fury and you will see his face red and swel'd, his eyes will be enflamed, his ears perform not their function, his mouth foames, his heart pants, his tongue stammers, his voice is shrill and ungrateful, his words inconsiderate: Finally, his whole body trembles as in a fever. The force of fury and rage hath broken veins in some persons, stopp'd them in others, it drives many into an Apoplexy, and divers have dyed suddenly in the height of this passion. This you may see at large described by that great Father of the Church

*Orat. ad S. Jo. Chrysostom.* Nor is there a more ungrateful and deformed object to behold (saith he) than a passionate and angry Man. *Et qualem putas animus*

*animus cuius extra imago tam facta est, fatis*  
*Seneca*: Nor is there any passion which gives  
 man so hideous a look, yea it makes even the  
 most beautiful countenance both horrible and  
 deformed to behold. *Senec. li. 2. de ira.*

All which may sufficiently perswade us both to  
 detest and fly this dangerous Vice; yea, and their  
 company also who are but subject to it; the holy  
 Ghost admonishing us that *in peace is his habita-*  
*tion,* and not in a turbulent cholerick soul. *S.*  
*Greg.* calls it the gate to all Vice; for by it, ran-  
 cor, imprecations, maledictions, blasphemies,  
 indignation, injurious words, swearing, revenge,  
 cursing, quarrels, murders, calumny, and many  
 other great sins are let into the soul by this  
 wicked gate; and therefore most justly num-  
 bered for one of the capital sins, as being the  
 wicked source from whence all these pernicious  
 crimes proceed, as well as many more; and  
 therefore most carefully to be avoided, not on-  
 ly as a brutal passion causing outwardly so bad  
 effects in the body, but chiefly for the great  
 disorder which it also inwardly procures in the  
 soul; as depriving her both of judgement and  
 reason; yea, it sets all on fire, and fills her  
 with fumes of distempered humours, and with  
 much obscurity and confusion: like one who  
 thrusting his master (that is reason) out of dores,  
 sets fire on the house, and burneth himself  
 within it. Or as if casting the Pilot out of the  
 Ship, exposeth the Vessel and himself without  
 a guide, unto the enraged and tempestuous  
 Sea.

*Prov. 22*

Y

This

This passion of Anger, is a vice which the very light of nature in Pagans did teach them to hate : For it was most truly said by *Seneca* ; that the Anger conceived for an injury, doth much more harm, than the injury it self received : but no angry man will acknowledge (*saieth S. Augustin*) nor conceive his own anger unjust. And therefore choler is most justly accounted the vice of fools, as the holy Ghost well assures us ; *Ecclesi.* 7. saying, that *ira in sinu stulti requiescit* : But the securest and most certain mark of a wise and rational man, is to be meek and mild ; to master his choler : and to be subject to reason.

A good means to avoid the great harm of this unruly, and pernicious passion, is to consider that it hath four several stations, wherein it particularly appeareth in Man. In the heart, in the face, in the tongue, and in our deeds. If now we perceive it to have already got possession in the first, we must use all speedy diligence to hinder that it enter not into the second. But if it likewise have gained entrance there : Then let us at least endeavour all we can to keep strong hold, and to fortifie our tongue against it. Which if it's outraging force and fury shall in like manner conquer, yet let us labour with all possible and faithful resistance to prevent the fourth ; to the end that by no means this brutal and outrageous passion appear in deeds and actual revenge, which God reserves wholly to himself ; and most expressly forbids us to be usurpers of that his most Sovereign right. True Christian Charity



Charity ought to prevent all sinful principles  
 herein; we being thereby obliged, not on-  
 ly to the love of God, but also for his sake, to  
 the love of our Neighbour; which if I be not  
 able any other waies to expresse it to him, by  
 doing some good turn, at least we ought to do  
 it by bearing with his imperfections, as I ex-  
 pect that others should do mine, according to  
 the blessed Apostles expresse command. *Gal: 6: 2*

A second good means to suppress this chole-  
 rick and angry humour when any offend us,  
 will be to consider seriously with our selves  
 how often, and how grievously we offend our  
 Lord and loving Redeemer; who in stead of  
 shewing anger or revenge, he continually pours  
 down his gifts and blessings upon us; drawing  
 us thereby to repentance, and to love him,  
 that so we may be capable of his Eternal  
 glory.

Consider this, and confound your self, if  
 any passion of unruly choler shall transport you  
 to impatience against your Servant, or any o-  
 ther person for some small offence. Remem-  
 ber how great an ingratitude it would be to-  
 wards God, to use with so little respect those  
 his Creatures, which both in nature, and in  
 the end for which they were made, are equal  
 with your self; whom notwithstanding he hath  
 subjected to do you service, though he might  
 as well have placed you in a far meaner condi-  
 tion than they are. Remember well the Apo-  
 stles words, that you have a common Master in  
 Heaven, and therefore you must not oppress  
 your servants, as a Tyrant, but govern them



with mildnesse and clemency, as Christian Charity doth require. Reflect also upon your self, and your own infirmities; and whether, if in their place, you should not be likely to have done much worse than they, with whom you are so angry and discontent; treating them with so great rigour and revenge for small and little faules, whilst God deals so very mildly with you; whose many enormous offences have much more justly deserved a most severe and rigorous punishment. But if you find your self obliged to reprehend, yet therewithall possessed actually with a motion of unruly choler; defer then that correction to another time. For to what purpose seek you to cure another, by giving a greater wound to your self, and to make two wounds instead but of one which was before. Expect therefore the time, that all passion being appeased, you may reprehend to good effect, in the Spirit of Lenity, Mildnesse, and Charity.

It is also very worthy of observation; that to be cholerick and full of passion, is no sign of a generous courage, but rather of great weakness, and want of true magnanimity of heart. For it is plain by experience, that sick and aged people are usually most subject (through the great debility of their spirit) to peevish choller and passion; whereas true courage, and a generous heart, conquereth and subiecteth them to reason, and to the law of God.

A good expedient to cure this sinful malady, may be, frequently to exercise mild and humble acts; when we are free from all choller and passion.

passion. 2ly. That we neither do, resolve, or command, when we are actually angry; but rather suspend all our actions, until our mind enjoy true peace and quiet: for a quiet, or an angry mind, seem to make two quite different men; and did justly move that wise Philosopher to appeal from *Cesar* in choler, unto *Cesar* not angry. And lastly, to implore Gods grace, to master this dangerous passion, and that the Sun may never set upon the same. Eph. 4.

Finally, a man of a mild, sweet, and gentle conversation is both honoured and served with much love by all; but the cholerick and peevish person is generally both despised & hated by every one. Wherefore to conclude, the best way to prevent this hurtful flame of anger, is to extinguish it in the beginning, and very first sparkle of the least passion thereof which shall be kindled in us: for if we once permit it to prevail, it will be very hard to quench it though we would.

You have now seen the several infirmities of this diseased bodie of an ill-regulated Conversation: all which proceeding generally, more or lesse, from the corrupted humour of a Soul infected with pride; the holy vertue of Humility must be the Antidote, and soveraign cure of them all; as well as of this one more also, which will not omit here briefly to adjoin to the rest; whereby we may the better avoid that ill-be-seeming vice

Of vain and affected singularity; of immodest Curiosity, either in excess of dressing; or in our behaviour.

**T**His vain and affected singularity must needs be ungrateful, in that we may seem by it to prefer our own judgment before that of others: and although we may think that in being like no body else, we become wiser than other men; yet we shall herein find our selves so far deceived, as on the contrary, we shall be censured by all of too much self-opinion and Pride. And therefore to be too exotick, or singular, either in behaviour, or Apparell, or in any other action whatsoever, is unpleasant, and savours but of vanity and self-esteem. For it is truly said, that though fools bring up fashions, yet wise men will be obliged to follow them; it being commendable prudence to conform our selves to what custom (in an indifferent matter) hath made to be generally the practise of all: and by a civil condescency to accommodate our selves to an indifferent and common practise; much rather than to be thought, by our declining it, to undervalue all other mens judgements, by preferring our own.

But I intend not here to advise you to a punctuality of observing all changes in fashions: no, far is my thought from that folly: for some may be either so immodest, or others so very

extravagant, as they are not to be used by any prudent and vertuous person. Nor is it necessary for you to be amongst the first in fashion, and new modes, or to change from one extreme to another; for as you ought not, on the one side to be singular in your fashion; so neither is it laudable on the other, to be amongst the first, and in the height of that new guise. But let a civil and prudent modesty be your rule, both for your cost, and fashion; remembering that we are admonished by the Holy Ghost to avoid herein all vanity and excessive: *in apparel* Eccl. xi. *do not glory at any time.* For what can be more fondly vain, since that Apparel is but the very badge of our greatest misery, and was ordained only to cover our deformed nakednesse and shame, together with other infirmities contracted by our sin? And therefore to take Pride in Apparel, is as impertinent, as for a beggar to glory in the bale rags wherewith he covers some foul and loathsom Ulcer.

Yet here it is to be observed; that by this sinful vanity in Apparel, is only to be understood the excessive therein; either above the condition, or means of the Person; for rich attire, or costly Ornaments were never unlawful in themselves, but only in their abuse: as is manifest in that renowned Judith; who putting off the Garments of her Widdow-hood, she washed and anointed her body with sweet oyl; she plaited the hair of her head with curiosity, and cloathed her self with her Garments of joy, (which she had accustomed to wear upon solemn Festivals days) she took Rings, Bracelets, Lillies, and Earrings, and with all her

Ornaments she adorned her self, to whom our Lord gave also much Beauty, because that all this trimming was for no motive of sensuality, but of vertue. And therefore her intention being good, her trimming was rendred grateful to God, and was blessed by him. As was also Queen Esther for her like lawful industry, whereby she gained the good grace of King *Abassuerus*, and obtained the preservation of her condemned Nation. Chast *Ruth* is not blamed, who being unmarried, made use of sweet Oyls, and of costly attire; thereby to render her self gracious to *Boos*, and soon after became his lawful Wife. By which examples it sufficiently appears, that rich Dressings, and costly attire (being regulated by a good intention) in due circumstance, and without scandal or prejudice to any, ought no wayes to be condemned; their riotous excesse is only to be blamed; that is, when they exceed the quality, and condition of the Persons who use them: for all ought not to be equal in attire, but each one according to his several degree. The Prince, the Gentleman, the Magistrate, and the Merchant, the Rich man, and the Peasant, all differently attired within the limits of their calling in a decent modesty, both well bebecoming, as also distinguishing their condition, the one from the other. For rich Silks are not for all sorts of People; nor is the Rustick Leather fit cloathing for a King, comely, neatness, and sitting decency is not to be blamed in any condition whatsoever; but rather much neglect of it deserves reprehension.

What

Ch. 5.

Ch. 3.



What therefore in this vanity may most be blamed, is immoderate application, excess, and much losse of times, which gave occasion to that incomparable worthy of our Nation, Sir *Thomas More*, to say; that many might gain Heaven with half the pains they take to purchase Hell. And he once beholding a young Lady very industriously curious in dressing and trimming her self: *O Madam* (said he) *how unjustly will God deal with you, if he give you not Hell, for which you take such extraordinary pains!* But for Heaven these people scarce find leisure to entertain one serious good thought: for whilst their whole industry is bent upon that vain outward bravery for the body, their soul is left inwardly naked of its true Ornament of vertue; and whilst by that costly attire they aim at much honour and esteem, they will be but hated of their poor needy Servants and Creditors, who greatly suffer for want of their due pay. They will be cursed by the poor, who receive no relief in their pressing necessities; and all other People will but scorn and despise their great and sinful folly, for placing the chief affection of their heart, and principal employment upon so unworthy an object, as is this meer outward covering of a poor contemptible carcase with so much pomp and bravery; which by *Augustus Cesar* (though but a Pagan) was learned with much reason, *the great standard of Pride, and the very nest of Luxury.*

The modest habit used by our greatest Princes of former times, may well confound the foolish vanity of this fantastical and sinful age; wherein our greatest Dames devoid of all inward



ward merit, they seek to authorise themselves by outward bravery: and Peacock-like with a small head and very few brains, they place their glory in richly coloured Feathers, and a long supported tail, a most troublesome superfluity, which can only seem comely, but to the Author of sin, who loves to ride upon such vanity, which should have been spared to cloath their cold, and naked brethren; whereby they might purchase Heaven; whilst by much cost, time, and pains spent in vainly pranking up themselves after the mode and new fashion; they will be condemned for it to Hell, if we believe that great Pillar of the Church, S. John Chrysostom, who agreeing with the other Fathers and ancient Doctors in crying down that most pernicious Devil, called the Fashion, or Mode, against which vain attires of themselves S. Chrysostom speaking, he hath these words: you kindling by your nakednesse a fire to burn poor souls, think you your selves exempt from sin, whilst you so unmodestly shewing your selves, you either excite, or at least greatly endanger to incite simple people in the fury of their unruly passion: yea, and even them also, who otherwise were most innocent, had it not been for beholding your evil enticements. And therefore you who are the cause, and have sharpened the sword, and armed the hand, can you conceive yourselves exempt from being guilty of such a soul? tell me, I beseech you; ought not they much rather to be blamed who compose the poisoned potion, & give the same to be drunk, than is the poor man allured most wickedly to drink the same? But it is you, O cruel and unhappy vain worldlings,

yea, it is you who prepare this pernicious poison which you present to be drunk by your unfortunate beholders; and you causing their death, can you think your selves to be innocent, because you drink not thereof your selves? No, doubtless you shall be more punished than the Apothecary, who having kill'd only the body; but you by a far greater crime have kill'd the soul; and to satisfy that your sinful and vain curiosity, you expose those souls to their utter perdition, which cost Jesus Christ no less a price than his most precious life and dearest blood. Thus far this holy Father and great Doctor of the Church S. Jo. Chrysostom. But had he now beheld the sinful and unchristian-like dressings of our time, with naked breasts, bare necks, arms and shoulders, which are used in our unmodest age, O what would he have said of thought! or how would he, or any other, if but endued with holy zeal, have said, to express the detestation which any modest mind ought to conceive against so unmodest, so unwomanly, and so detestable a dressing.

To this sinful excels in apparel, and curious dressing, is also frequently adjoyned an affected vanity, no less favouring of pride, and as worthily to be condemned as the former, in all such as by their painting, frizeling, powdring & black-patching, would endeavour to change, or at least to better the proper handy-work of God, by that their rather much disguising the same; for should that divine workman to fix those their best contrived patches, as to remain ever immoveable, they would soon be ashamed to appear with such disguised deformities, and all  
would

would then esteem them (as truly they are) but a meet disfiguring of what they so vainly intended to beautifie and amend.

In stead of all which vain and sinful industry, the vertuous soul may much more happily, by the help of a pure intention, adorn and beautifie her self with such ornaments of true vertue, as may render her most grateful in the sight of God; if when putting on her garments, she humbly crave that her soul may be invested with true charity of *Jesus Christ*. If when she makes use of sweet powders, she endeavour to refresh the memory of Mans bale extraction from dust and ashes, to which she must recur. If when using any perfumes, or sweet oyles, she excite her soul to implore Gods grace; that by imitation, she may run after the sweet odour of the blessed vertues of *Jesus Christ*. Finally,

Gen. 3. Cant. 7. if when beholding her self in a glass, she implore divine grace to behold the true state of her soul, by a due examen of conscience, and by hearty contrition, to expiate, and to obtain pardon for her sin; and therewithall to consider that at the hour of death a clear glass will be shew'd us, wherein we shall plainly behold all the graces, helps, and means given us by God, to live well, and whereby we might have gained Heaven, had we made good use of them: 2ly the number and enormity of our sins. 3ly, the horrid deformity to which they have reduced us. 4ly, the eternal beatitude of Heaven which they have caused us to lose. And 5ly, the infinit and eternal punishment of Hell, to which they condemn us for ever. O what sorrow, grief,

grief, and desparation will then possess the unhappy and unrepentant expiring Soul.

The second excess by too affected curiosity, may be in too ardent desire of knowledge, beyond the due bounds of sobriety, forbid by S. Paul, and which is so much the more dangerous, as we conceive less peril in offending 3. Rom. 12.

thereby. For the immoderate desire of knowledge, and vain curiosity of learning daily new things, doth so intirely take up the whole power of our understanding, as that the will is wholly exhausted, neglected and so badly cultivated, as that it produced no fruit at all in the soul; but rather from thence it is that our indevotion, coldness, and tepidity in all vertue proceeds; all spiritual exercises neglected; as also our prayer, which we either abridge, omit, or at least perform it with much precipitation irreverently and with hast, thereby to gain more time to satisfie our longing appetite in feeding too curiously upon some new knowledge, to which our vain fancy doth lead us. Which itching desire to know, proceeding from that corrupted source of pride and self-esteem, the Apostle had good reason to give us warning to beware of that dangerous surfeit of Science which puffs men up with self conceipt; and if destitute of Charity, and true humility; it will be much more subject to prejudice, than to profit our Souls. 1. Cor. 8. 1.

The best means to moderate this vicious excess; is to consider that knowledge without vertue is of no esteem with God; nor did the blessed Saints obtain their Beatitude by learning

Learning, but by vertue and good deeds; the Divels have all natural knowledge in perfection, and yet that doth nothing profit them for their redemption from those endless tormenting flames in Hell. We ought therefore so to moderate our studying for knowledge, as that it may not hinder our better exercise of Prayer or vertuous acts of Piety, to satisfie a meer natural curiosity for some vain or ambitious end.

I conclude this discourse, in condemning likewise all inordinate affectation to vain singularity, both in behaviour, and in all other actions; it being a Vice no lesse ungrateful than the rest, and seems to relish rather more of Vanity and desire of esteem; whilst we so apparently strive to do more than doth well become us, either by over-acting, to excel all others, or by imitating another person out of some vain end, and flatteries like as we read of *Aristotle* his Scholars, who affected flustering to resemble their Master: And the Disciples of *Plato* went crooked in the back, in imitation of his imperfection. Others by soothing flatterie become no lesse ridiculous, as were those Court-fawning claw-backs of the heretical Emperor *Constantine Copronymus* (which surname was given him because he fouled the Font when he was Christened; and it well might seem to prognosticate his inclination to all Filth, both in bodie and mind) who was so delighted in the smell of Horse-dung, as he would usually be all besmeared with it. And his colloquing Courtiers, to please the Emperor by imitation of that  
his



his most nastie fancy, did all strive, who should most bedaub their best apparel with that bestial perfume.

In fine, vanity is the ground of both these errors in Conversation, and true humble and vertuous simplicity of heart, is their cure, and will make their Conversation verie grateful both to God and Man; whereas affectation and singularity, makes them unpleasing to both.

Much more might yet be said of our Conversation concerning morality; as also in order to holy vertue; which I rather remit to the prudent reflexions of a vertuous soul upon occurrent occasions: recommending only to her that she keep a continual fixt eye in all her chiefeft actions upon the two former, so frequently mentioned good guides, which are best able to regulate them, and to render her Conversation most grateful to God; to wit, *Purity of intention*, and *the memory of Gods Divine Presence*. These two are most sovereign Antidotes against all kind of sin; and have power to make even our meanest actions meritorious of a glorious reward in Heaven. Finally, they being steered by these two guiding poles to Eternity, and helped also by that prosperous Gale of Gods divine Grace; you may conceive an humble confidence to sail securely through all the dangerous storms of this mortal life, and at last to arrive at that thrice happie, and most secure port of Eternal Beatitude.

You have heard what is required for a true Christian Conversation; as also what is laudable,



ble, and what worthily to be blamed therein. It now only remains that I propose to you a faithful guide; by whose unerring dictamen (if you shall faithfully regulate your actions) you will be secure from all dangerous errors. This needful Guide is

*The Vertue of Prudence and Discretion, most necessary for the right Regulating a true laudable, and Christian Conversation.*

**P**rudence is the chief and principal of all the cardinal Vertues, as both *S. Anthony* and *Cassian* affirm. *S. Ambrose* calls it the directing Vertue to all our actions, and is no lesse needful to them, than is a stern to a Ship; yea, it gives them their right course, as doth a byas to the Bowl in bringing it right to the mark. This great vertue of discretion is so generally necessary, as that all other Vertues whatsoever, require to be seasoned with it; yea, without Discretion, Vertue would be no vertue, saith *S. Anthony*, and even the best of them would become blameable, and degenerate to vice. *Be not too just*, saith the holy Ghost, which shews

*Ec. 7:17:* us that even in justice it self, a due mean must be used, discretion being both the Rule and Guide of true Vertue; yea, immoderate austerity, and all excesse in Devotion is blameable in the sight of God; for true zeal, and right piety consists in a mean, and is to be guided by prudence, without which it can be no vertue

vertue at all; is being as the torch which gives light to the obscurity of our understanding, to the end it decline not from the right path of a just moderation. It is the vertue most proper to man, & to be destitute thereof, is to fall into the rank of fools, and to be esteemed incapable of any worthy employment amongst men; for who are destitute of discretion, resemble but irrational Creatures; since that by reason only we are distinguished from them, and by discretion (which is the operation thereof) we are known to be rational men.

This Vertue of Christian Prudence is ever accompanied with humility, still readie to take direction and advice of a vertuous and prudent Director, much rather than to follow its own private sense; which for want of due consideration (especially in the exterior and corporal acts of Piety) may greatly prejudice our spiritual profit of much more importance; and by applying our selves too much to inferior acts of Vertue, we may disenable our selves for those of a far higher degree; with indiscreet mortifications; and thereby so weaken as well our corporal force, as also our spiritual powers, that necessity constraining us to abandon both; we may cast our selves into a dejected languishing condition; and being forced for recovery to quit our accustomed devotions, we may become subject thereby to fall unto much coldness therein; as also into several other temptations: all which proceed from want of well regulating, by the Rule of Prudence and discretion, our own forces of bodie and mind in a due proportion

portion to the practise of those pious exercises, which we did not discreetly undertake.

The nature of this vertue consists in keeping a watchful eye over all our actions, and so rightly to rule them by reason, and true Christian justice, as to shun sin, and to practise vertue in all we do: for Gods glory, and beatitude being our last and only end; true Prudence requires, that we do no act deliberately which may be contrary thereunto, nor to the true dictamen of reason; wherein to prevent our failing, that great Master of natural morality, wise *Seneca*, gives us this prudent Maxim for our Conversation: that we converse with friends, as if one day they were to be our Enemies: and with our Enemies, as if they were assuredly to prove our loving Friends: for mans mind is unconstant (saith *Job*) and what it hates to day, it may love to morrow; or to the contrary: And therefore as in our disaffection we must be very wary, neither to say, or do, what upon future friendship might cause us confusion; so likewise we must be as prudently circumspect in our love, and forbear to communicate in time of friendship, what by after disaffection might cause us to repent. In fine, true Prudence requires that we so converse with all, as that we avoid the danger of all reproach and confusion from either friend or foe: for this is a high point of true prudence in so corrupt an age, and wherein true solid friendship is so very hard to be found amongst so very fickle, changeable, and unconstant men, who are best known by good leasure; many appearing

pearing at first sight quite otherwise than soon after they are discovered to be; and therefore it would be great imprudence to be sudden, or too facile to manifest our humour, or opinion in every discourse and company. It belongs also to this vertue of discretion, to avoid all extremes, and to keep still in a mean, neither denying, nor yet believing all: but weighing by the scales of due reason, we must keep our selves dis-engaged from all contentious contradiction, and not give offence unto any.

Finally, in four things (saith learned Gracian) we must not be too sudden, nor hasty; to believe, to grant, to promise, nor to resolve; nor must we be (saith he) too facile in conversation, which will cause but contempt and disdain.

Many more dictamens of true Christian Prudence for a vertuous conversation might here be inserted; but brevity obliges me to conclude them in this one for all the rest: that our conversation ever tend with a pure intention to the glory of God; to the edification of our neighbour, and to the profit of our own souls; to a holy Conversation, and godlinesse (saith S. Hier) and that it be in Heaven (saith S. Paul;) Phil. 3. It so to be tempered with prudence, as that we carefully avoid all tedious importunity: which may best be done by a pleasant and cheerful glancing now and then towards devotion, as fit occasion may be offered; and taking opportunity from the great variety, and different ends and operations of these mortal natures, we may sweetly raise our hearts to

gratitude and admiration of the eternal Creator for both of them and us. For by this means, God will be honoured in all things, as S. Peter commands; and we shall imitate the industrious Bee, which out of all sorts of Flowers extracts that most pure sweet honey for her provision, whereby she afterwards subsists; as also doth a religious soul upon the happy grace of God which is gained by the practise of those several acts of vertue; and is the happy price whereby to purchase glory in Eternity.

You have seen what is required for a true vertuous and Christian Conversation, as also what ought to be avoided therein. It now only remains for the final accomplishment of this Rule, as also for a further help to a vertuous soul, desirous to put in practise what is required therein, that I here finally shew

*What matter, or subject may be best for entertaining this vertuous conversation, and holy discourse.*

- F**irst, concerning the matter in general for our conversation; no immodest nor unseemly words must fall from our mouth, as the
- Eph. 4. Apostle admonisheth, our discourse must be good and profitable to the hearers; nor must any uncleanness be so much as named, as be
- Eph. 3. comes Saints; nor foolish talk, or scurrility, &c.
- 2ly. Our discourse must be answerable both to Persons, time, and place; and ought in all



occasions to be good, or at least indifferent, that by a good intention it may be rectifi'd, and made grateful to God.

3ly. It must be also suitable to the end of our present conversation; for it would be great imprudence to make Preaching discourses in time for civil recreation. *S. Lewis*, and *S. Charles Barrmons* would permit no studious or serious discourse immediately after meals; it being then a time to give some relaxation to the mind by innocent and cheerful pastime, or talk: and to do otherwise is to mistake the very end of all honest recreation, wherein familiar and dialogue-like discourse is only proper; and all earnest disputes, or over serious conferences are very unseasonable in that occasion.

Thus far concerning what is required for a holy and true Christian-like conversation. But perchance you may yet further desire some method whereby to be furnisht in all occasions with right matter wherewith to entertain discourse, which may at least be innocent and not displeasing to the different humors of several Persons, to whom we are expos'd to entertain discourse and conversation upon different occasions which may occur in the day: which discourse, for that it ought ever to tend to the edification both of our selves, and others; the best helps to be well furnisht with ample matter for such entertainments, may be these following.

First, for this effect, to read and well observe the lives of Saints, which will yield an ample subject for all good discourse; for they being



happily arrived to that secure Port, to which we tend, it behoves us to follow their steps, as most secure Guides; and diligently to inform our selves of the manner of their conversation, and to make it the model of ours. Also frequenting good Sermons, and to use spiritual reading, will afford plentiful matter both for Pious and profitable Conversation. Gods various and wonderful works, as well in Heaven, as in Earth, for the use of ungrateful Man, may administer also very ample scope at all times and occasions to admire, and to discourse of his great power and goodness. Other considerations may be, the innumerable miseries incident to the frail nature of Man: the shortnesse of his Life; and the great incertainty of the same; together with the innumerable miseries wherewith it is replenished. The two different Eternities which depend upon this present, fickle, short, and so very doubtful a moment of this life. What pain and punishment shall follow a wicked and sinful Life, which hath usually a sufficient taste in this World what may be expected for all Eternally in the other; whereas vertue and godlinesse, reapeth great present joy and happinesse; and endlesse Beatitude for its recompence. The great negligence amongst the most part of Christians to frame their lives according to Gods Commandments; whilst by their sinful neglect in observing them, they expose their souls unto evident damnation, and suffer without comparison far greater misery in this life, than they would have done by observing Gods holy Law; as by a good reflexi-

on,

on, but to consider the great difference betwixt  
 a debaish, and a virtuous life, it will very plain-  
 ly appear. The vaniey and great folly in seek-  
 ing with so vehement an application the ho-  
 nours, wealth, and deceitful pleasures of this  
 World: for the most unworthy purchase where-  
 of, many employ their whole time, thoughts, and  
 industry. The great hazard and pains to which  
 Soldiers, Merchants, Courtiers, and all world-  
 lings expose themselves for obtaining these  
 vain and poor unworthy transitory things, and  
 how very few observe, or direct their lives ac-  
 cording to the maxims of our Christian Faith  
 which they professe. How absorpt men gene-  
 rally are in providing for this uncertain, short,  
 and mortal life; and how exceeding negligent  
 and forgetful in providing for our Heavenly  
 Blisse; although that be the one only and ne-  
 cessary thing to which we ought chiefly to at-  
 tend, and is so particularly recommended unto  
 us all by Jesus Christ in the Person of *S. Mary  
 Magdalen*. The great beauty and pleasure in  
 vertue, and the only true solid worth and hap-  
 pinesse which is to be found in the practise  
 thereof. The great deceitfulness, and misery  
 in serving vice, or our disordinate appetites and  
 unruly passions; as also the great comfort and  
 content of mind which is reaped by the holy  
 practise of vertue, and the sad repentance which  
 always followeth vice. The Devils great ma-  
 lice and continual industry to draw us to our e-  
 ternal misery: and our good Angels care, and  
 loving help to assist us towards our Beatitude.  
 What, and how many sovereign means God

Luke 10.

hath provided us, whereby to obtain that our final happinesse which we so shamefully neglect, and do most sinfully abuse.

Hier. 12.  
11.

Finally, the great neglect and shameful carelesse of Man in thinking least of what doth most concern him for Eternity, which is his end and only businesse for which God plac'd him in this World: the want of which serious consideration is the universal unhappy cause of our general desolation, and great misery of Man; *because there is none who doth seriously consider in his heart,* saith the Prophet. And this is also of it self most evident, for due reflexion begets in us a knowledge of that whereof we thought; which knowledge produceth affection; and affection fails not to proceed to operation: all which is but a natural sequel, and as a disposition of the cause to its effect. Now the building of salvation being founded upon these Christian principles, and most certain maxims which ought seriously to be pondred, and entertained also frequently in our thoughts: that God is omnipotent: that he is every where, and over-sees as well my thoughts, as deeds, and which he will reward, or punish according to due desert. That our life is short and most uncertain, whereon depends our sentence to our eternal weal, or woe. That the four last things of Man, but wellpondred, are warranted by the Holy Ghost, to be a preservative against all sin. That to follow Christ, we must deny our selves, bear cheerfully our Crosse, and follow him. That in the first place we must seek the  
King-

Kingdom of Heaven and his Justice, and all things else will be given us.

Now from these so many several heads (and the like) we may easily gather sufficient matter for good discourse in conversation, which God will not fail to suggest to a willing soul desirous of his glory, and her own eternal good: yea, all our Conversation may be rendred hereby both Pious, Meritorious and very profitable; nor can we want convincing arguments to blesse and to adore the infinite goodnesse and great mercy of God; as also to condemn our own ingratitude and sinful rebellion against so soveraign a Lord, and most loving Redeemer.

Hitherto concerning Rules whereby to regulate the actions of our life. I must now finally conclude with one more which may dispose us to a happy death. This I shall God willing endeavour to perform by what shall here be said in

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THE

## The Sixth and last

## R U L E,

*Shewing the great necessity to prepare  
our selves for death in time of  
health : together with a profita-  
ble Exercise by way of a spiritual  
retreat, serving for the same end.*

*A momento mortis pendet Aeternitas.*

**T**HIS is a point so mainly importing us, as  
but to fail therein would frustrate all our  
former pains. And therefore to prevent the  
danger of so great an evil; the best expedient  
which I can recommend to you, is a careful  
observance of these former Rules; it being ma-  
nifest that the most assured way to obtain a good  
death, is first to live a good life; yea, the one  
is but the true Echo of the other; and much  
folly it would be to hope for a happy death, and  
yet wholly to neglect a good life, whereupon  
the other depends. When a tree is cut down, it  
still falls to that side to which it bent whilst it  
grew: So ordinarily our death is, good, or bad,  
accor-



according as our life was bent to good, or to evil; and therefore who neglect their life, have great cause to fear their death. For as what most buſied our minds awake, is alſo moſt in our weak fancies, being aſleep; and to what we have been moſt habituated in our life, doth alſo moſt poſſeſs us in weakneſs, and near our death. Many will ſay with *Balaam*: *O let me dye the death of the juſt, and be my end like unto theirs.* But they ought much rather to ſay: *O let me live the life of the juſt, that my end may be like unto theirs.* Ungodly men deſire to dye the death of the godly; but they will not live the life of the godly; for to dye well, is the way to felicity; but to live well is a matter of labour. And yet that is not to be obtained without this. A certain man having more wit in his head, than Religion in his heart, being asked what he thought of the ſtrict life of religious men: and of the jovial life of libertines: he answered: I would wiſh to live, ſaid he, a libertine, but I would dye as religious. O no, that is an important Science which requires to be ſtudied all our life. Yea, he liveth well, who ſpends his whole life in learning to dye well: And who learns not this art, is truly ignorant, though for all the reſt he be as wiſe as *Plato*, or as learned as was *Ariſtotle*; who being upon the point to dye, he cryed out: *I entred into this world in poverty; I lived therein with miſery; and now finally I dye in ignorance, of that (he meant) which moſt importred him to know; for he had not learned the art of dying well; wherein*

Numb.

23.

wherein the only true wisdom and knowledge doth consist.

This happy and most needful art, is best learned by dying first in mind to the world, before we can live rightly to God; yea, we must dye very often in mind, to dye once truly well. This was the practise of holy *S. Augustine* when he said: *Let me dye, to the end I may not dye*; he means, that by often conceiving himself as a dying man, to make familiar by frequent practise in the time of health, the exercises of those necessary acts which are to be used at the time of our death; for who learns not in time of health to practise the holy acts of vertue, and to resist the temptations most incident to that dangerous extremity; how shall he do it well at the true hour of his death, when the battel will be more furious, and he much weaker to resist; yea, by pain, and other impediments in time of sickness (and chiefly when near to our end) we are many ways hindered from performing the duty which we then ought to render unto God. And therefore it greatly imports us so to practise them in time of health, as if we were then actually at the very point of our death: which being seriously, and frequently performed, it will produce a true contempt of the world, a holy disengagement from the creatures thereof, an amendment of our life, and will also make the practise of those acts much more easie to us at the time of our death.

This

This exercise may best be made by way of these ten ensuing Meditations; which you may take for the subject of a Spiritual Retreat for so many daies; or for half the time, as occasion, and your Spiritual Director shall best advise you. And for the method of your Meditations, you may use the same which I formerly mentioned in blessed Sales in his Introduction to a devout Life. The substance of this Exercise, I have collected partly out of the R.F. Ende a Missionary Priest, and a most pious Author: the which I earnestlie (yet again) recommend, and very heartilie exhort you to make use thereof once a year, at least: And if your occasions will so permit; no time is more proper for it than the holy week. Part 2/  
Ch. 2.

O Sovereign and Divine Redeemer Jesus, by the sacred Merits of thy most bitter Death, the Gates of Heaven were opened to mans Eternal Life; so animate I beseech thee this Holy Exercise with thy Divine Love; that by a devout practise thereof, thou mayest find us at the hour of our Death so well prepared, as that ever after we may live to blesse, to praise, and to love thee, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, world without end.

**The**

*The first MEDITATION*  
*Of submission and conformity to Gods*  
*Divine Will, concerning our Death.*

It. 38.

**T**HE Preparation. Conceive your self as now after a sharp and grievous sicknesse upon your death bed approaching fast unto your Agony, abandoned of all humane help; and an Angel from God to denounce the irrevocable sentence for your departure to another world; and therefore to dispose of your temporal affairs, for that you should not escape. Here at the foot of your Crucifix implore the light, and grace of the Holy Ghost. And first, placing your self in the Presence of God. Secondly, beseech him to inspire you with his Grace. Thirdly, and (which serves as a general advice for this, and all the ensuing Meditations) you must endeavour so to behave your self therein, as if they were to be your last. And therefore labour to procure such interior affections in your soul, as ought to be wished, were you assured to die that present day. Beg humbly the intercession of the sacred Virgin Mother of God; of your good Angel, and of your holy Patrons, and all the blessed Saints in Heaven, that they vouchsafe to intercede to God for mercy, and his grace for all necessary dispositions to die with true repentance, and with final perseverance in his love.

Confi-

*Considerations.*

First, here consider your self as present before your sovereign Judge, pronouncing that just sentence of death against you in those words to Adam, Gen. 3. and in him against all men, *dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return.* With what infinite love, and profound humility, Jesus Christ, that innocent and immaculate Lamb, did accept from wicked Pilate that cruel sentence of a reproachful death upon the Crosse; submitting himself entirely to his heavenly Fathers will to satisfy the Divine justice for our offences.

In due honour and homage of that our most merciful and loving Redeemers obedience to so bitter a Passion, we must with all cheerful alacrity submit our selves to that irrevocable sentence of death so justlie due to our sin; and thereby acknowledge Gods sovereign right; as *Heb. 9.* likewise his power over all creatures, which having frequently so very sinfullie abused, we ought in satisfaction and due punishment, to accept with all willing and humble conformity the privation of whatsoever can be dear unto us, and to adore and blesse his divine disposing both of us and them, as well for time as all Eternity.

*Affections.*



*Affections and Resolutions.*

**O** Divine and loving Jesu, who being the source and fountain of all true life; yet didst vouchsafe to die so painful a death for me. In grateful and humble acknowledgments thereof, I accept from this instant with a willing heart, that suffering state which thy Divine will hath ordained me, in adoration of thy sacred death and passion for my sake.

I most willingly in honour also, and in union of that thy naked poverty, and being forsaken upon the Crosse, do here now render my self to what want or misery soever thy heavenly justice, and holy pleasure hath ordained for me; be it by Persecution, by Calumny, Scorn, Confusion, or by any other injury, or Sufferance from any Creature whatsoever. All which I humbly accept in expiation of my sins, and yield my self most willingly to suffer all pains and infirmities, by thy divine will allotted me; by agony, and death it self.

Ch. 53. All which, and what else soever they be, I accept thereof in honour, union, and adoration of thy most dolorous death, and cruel torments, for which the Prophet *Esaï* so justly called thee *a man of sorrows*. And I most entirely submit my self to die in true conformity to thy holy will; be it without the comfort of my Friends, or senses; that I die this year, or this day, this hour, or moment, where, or in what manner thy Divine Providence shall ordain;

dain; vouchsafe but, O Lord, that my desire  
may ever be, *thy will be done*, and that my heart  
accompany it with true contrition and perse-  
verance in thy grace.

This grant me dear Jesu for thy bitter passi-  
on sake; and then let death assault me in bed,  
or in the Field; by lingring pain, or by sudden  
accident; be it natural, or violent; honorable,  
or ignominious; be it but thy blessed pleasure,  
and welcome: *yea, Father, for so hath it well* Luke 18:  
*pleased thee.*

Grant Lord Jesu, I beseech thee, that as thou  
vouchsafedst to dye for the love of me; so I may  
both live, and dye, purely for the love of thee,  
and that neither living, nor dying, I may ever  
any more offend thee: but that finally I may  
breath fourth my soul in cheerful conformity  
to that most holy obedience; wherewith thou  
didst render thy blessed spirit upon the Crosse  
into thy Heavenly Fathers hands. And seeing;  
O Lord, that death is ordained for just punish-  
ment of wicked sin, I embrace it therefore with  
a most willing and humble heart; and in the  
true spirit of penance I most joyfully accept  
thereof, together with all the pain and tempo-  
ral privations whatsoever accompanying the  
same. Receive O merciful Jesu from a contrite  
and humble heart, in expiation of all my enor-  
mous sin, this sacrifice of my dearest life; which  
as a victim and entire Holocaust, I here most  
willingly do offer to thee in due acknowlege-  
ment of thy sovereign power and just right over  
all thy Creatures both in Heaven and Earth.  
O let the fire of thy Divine love, dear Lord,

consume all other being of me; that I may wholly and entirely remain in thee, to love, to blesse, to praise, and magnifie the most sacred Trinity, three persons, and one only God to be adored for all eternity: to whose divine will I wholly abandon my self; O Heavenly Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, vouchsafe ye to dispose of me both now, and for ever, as may be for my poor soules good, and your own greater honour and glory.

### *The Conclusion.*

1. **G**ive God humble thanks for the good resolutions and affections which he hath given you. 2ly. Crave his Grace to put them in execution. 3ly. Implore the Divine assistance of the blessed Virgin and holy Saints. *Pater, Ave, Credo.*

## *The second MEDITATION*

*About making our last Will and Testament.*

**P**reparation. 1. Place your self in Gods Divine presence, 2ly. Beseech him to inspire you. 3ly. Conceive your soveraign Judge, as if thus calling upon you: *render an account of thy Bayliffship.*

Zuke 16.

*Considerations.*

**A** Will, or Testament, is only a protestation of Justice, by which is given to every one their due. The Body to the Earth, and Worms, debts unto Creditors. The inheritance to lawful Heirs. Our Alms to the Poor; and our soul unto God; to whom we are to render a most strict accompt for the use of all such Talents which he hath lent us to be employ'd for the increase of his glory; as also for every moment of our Life, and for each thought, word, and deed therein.

Which supposed it remains most manifest, that we all are bound at our death to dispose both justly and piously of the temporal goods which God did but lend us for his honour, and our own souls health. And therefore it is greatly to be admired how carelessly many neglect this important accompt, by deferring the same, till neither time, nor understanding permits them to discharge either their duty to God, or true Justice to their Neighbor; exposing thereby their souls to eternal perdition; and their best friends and kindred to irreconcilable contention, for want of due form, and deliberate maturity to make perfect their last Testament: by which abuse sometimes they may offend more grievously at that last hour in this World, than they had done by the ill use of them, all their whole Life before.

And therefore what folly, and great madnes it is to defer this so important a recokning to the last day of our Life; when the pain of our sicknesse; the fear of this dreadful accompt; the weaknesse of our senses, and other powers; and finally the importunity of many, then ordinarily about their own private interests, will hardly permit us to do any thing as we ought, either for the glory of God, or for our own souls good; nor yet to our friends satisfaction: but frequently with such confusion, and so very imperfectly; as we leave thereby occasion of great quarrels and strife, causing much breach of Charity (as is said before) amongst nearest friends, when we are dead, to the prejudice both of our souls and memory.

To prevent all which great evils, it may be a good expedient in time of healtch to make use sometimes of this good exercise, that in rendering thereby familiar these ensuing considerations and affections, concerning a spiritual Testament, we may be inspired also how to dispose aforehand in good time, of our temporal trust, according to true Justice and Piety.

Considering first, that both our being, and all we have is meerly from Gods great bounty and goodnesse; and but lent us only to be employed for his greater honour and glory, and therefore it is a point of main concernment to take in good time that council which the Prophet *Esa* gave to King *Exechias*, advertising him to dispose presently of his affairs, for that he was shortly to dye; and not to defer till the last, when weaknesse both of body and mind



mind would render him lesse able to perform it as he should.

2ly. We must consider it as a main subtilty of the Diuel to perswade us to defer the making our Will, till the last extremity; for he well knows how greatly it imports us to be free from all temporal affairs at the hour of our death, that being left wholly dis-engaged, we may treat freely with God all the necessary concerns of our soul.

3ly. Frame your last Will and Testament according to the model of our Divne example Jesus Christ; accompanying the same with pious and fervent affections, as be these which follow, or some such like.

### *Affections and Resolutions.*

**D**EAR Jesu, who by thy last Will and Testament gavest all entirely to me, dying poor and naked upon the Crosse for my redemption, without reserving what might have covered thy naked and wounded body: yea all, and to the very last drop of thy most precious blood. In humble gratitude whereof, I here bequeath to thee my Life, my Death, my Body, my Soul, with all the powers and operations of them both. And as the chiefest Legacy which thou bequeathedst to thy Apostles, was that new commandment of mutual love. In honour and homage of which, I here humbly crave thy grace to fortifie me in that holy vertue of Charity; whereby I most cordially embrace ( in union of

Joh. 11.  
34.

that thy most loving Commandment ) all against whomsoever my corrupt nature may, or ever hath conceived any aversion.

John 19. And as upon the Crosse, thou there didst recommend thy blessed Mother to thy beloved Apostle; and in him, us all to her: so I here, Lord Jesu, now recommend most humbly to thee, all the necessities of thy dear Spouse the Catholick Church; and of all my nearest friends, and greatest Enemies; to assist and protect them in all their most need, both for body and soul: and to bring us all finally to that eternal Bliss, there to adore, to praise, and love thee without end.

This Lord Jesu is my present Will and Testament; which I here most willingly sign both with my heart and hand. Vouchsafe thou to strengthen and confirm the same, by putting to it the seal of thy Heavenly grace, that no sinful malice may ever change this my holy resolution.

*Conclusion.*

**T**hank God for your good affections, and resolutions. 2ly. Implore his grace to make good use of them. 3ly. Crave pardon for your negligence in Prayer. *Prayer, Ave, Credo.*

*The*

## The third MEDITATION

*Of Confession and Satisfaction which we ought to make to God for our sins.*

**P**reparation. First place your self in the Presence of God. 2ly. Beseech him to inspire you. 3ly. Conceive your self as a guilty criminal before your just and Sovereign Judge.

### *Considerations.*

**C**onceive your self as at the feet of Jesus Christ, there actually present in his most sacred humanity; and with a contrite and humble heart accuse your self to him of all your grievous sins. First calling to mind Gods great and innumerable benefits, and rendring him all humble thanks for the same. In the next place acknowledge your many great offences; and what due satisfaction Gods divine justice may require at our hands, And considering that the best sign of doing well, is to acknowledge what we have done amiss; we must resolve to make a good Confession, with more than ordinary diligence; and with so careful a preparation, as if it were to be our last; and with a firm purpose to amend.

We must also resolve to make restitution (if cause require it) as also to depose all ill will and enmity ; to put away all imminent danger of mortal sin. And finally to stir up your heart to true fervent devotion, by these ensuing affections, and resolutions, or the like.

*Affections, and Resolutions.*

**T**Hou hast created me, O God, to love and serve thee, who art most worthy of all true service, and love. My obligation to thee is infinite ; and yet how often and how grievously have I offended thee by thought, word, and deed, and by sinful omission, by my corporal senses, and by all the powers of my sinful soul : Yea, by the abuse of these very creatures, which thou so carefully hast ordained for my use.

Ah how enormous is my ingratitude and infidelity ! O my most dear Redeemer *Jesus*, I here cast all these detestable sins into that immense Ocean of mercy, still flowing from thy most precious blood : purifie me thereby, O Lord, and confirm my present resolution, rather to dye, than by the like to offend thee any more.

O that my heart could melt into true sorrow and grief for my detestable sin ; and into tears of blood to wash away my heinous crimes ! what can I do, great God, in reparation of so infinite a wrong, but only to offer unto thee that

that inexhaustable treasure of the Sacred Passion of thy divine Son *Jesus*; which I here present to the glorious *Trinity*, in satisfaction and expiation of all my sins, committed from the instant of my first use of reason, until this present time.

In union of which dear ransom, I now entirely give my self to thee: I accept, and do most willingly embrace all the pains, both in body and soul, which thy eternal decree hath allotted me, either for this world, or the next. Admit thereof; sweet Lord I beseech thee, and reject not a contrite and humble heart, which hath no other hope of pardon for my great offences, but from thy abundant mercy only, who hath promised, that whensoever the sinner shall truly repent, thou wilt no more remember his iniquities.

O Eternal Father, who hast so loved the world, as thou gavest thy only begotten dear Son for it. This gives me much hope, great Lord, to obtain thy mercy, he being given not for the condemnation, but for the salvation of all such as shall believe in him.

O divine *Jesus*, be thou to me a *Jesus* and save me; thou thy self assuring us, that thou cam'st into this world for the sinners sake, and not for the Just: nor seekest thou the death of a sinner, but that he be converted, and live. O Ezech. 18.  
convert me so to thee, dear Saviour of sinners, that I may live to love and praise thee for all Eternity. Luke 5.

Come O Holy Ghost, and replenish me with thy heavenly gifts; purifie, justifie, quicken, and



and sanctifie my sinful soul; consume in it by the fire of thy divine love, what ever yet remains earthly and terrestrial; strengthen it at the last separation from my bodie with thy holy grace, against all the dangerous assaults of my most wicked and mortal Enemie.

### *The Conclusion.*

1. Give God thanks for your good affections, and Resolutions. 2ly. Crave grace to put them in Execution. 3ly. Begg humbly pardon for all negligence, or irreverence in your Prayer. *Pater, Ave, Credo.*

## *The fourth MEDITATION*

### *Of the Holy Communion.*

**P**reparation. 1. Place your self in the presence of God. 2ly. Beseech him to inspire you. 3ly. Endeavour by internal fervent acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, and of other vertues to prepare your Nuptial Garment, as an invited guest to the solemn Feast of the great King of Heaven and Earth.

### *Considerations.*

**T**HE holy Communion being a Sovereign means whereby to prepare our selves to a happy

happy death; it will be requisite to take one day in this exercise to dispose our selves with all due preparation and devotion to this Holy action: and with as much care and diligence, as if it were to be our last *viaticum*, and at the dreadful hour of Death.

Hearken to your good Angel, as if inviting you to eat of this bread of life; and saying to you as he did to the Prophet *Helie*: *Rise up and eat, for you have a long way to go.* 3Kin. 19.

Represent to your self Jesus Christ (accompanied with the blessed Virgin, with your Angel Guardian, and holy Patrons) to enter into your Chamber, to administer to you with his own sacred hands his most blessed bodie, in the same manner as he did to his Apostles at his last Supper with them. And having adored him with profound humility, endeavour to produce some fervent ejaculations of thanksgiving and love, accompanied also with these ensuing acts, or the like.

*Affections and Resolutions.*

**O** My God, my Creator and Redeemer, my beginning and my end, my sole full satisfaction, and Beatitude! my desire is extream to receive thee, thereby to be united perfectly to thee: cometherefore Lord Jesu into my Soul, sanctifie and replenish all the powers thereof. Inhabit my Bodie, and purifie its senses; possess my heart, and there appropriate to thy self entirely all its affections, to the end that each

each moment remaining of my present life may be truly consecrated and wholly employed in thy Divine and most happy love.

O my great and most loving God, we being assured by thy own eternal word, that who shall eat thee, shall live for ever: vouchsafe me this grace, that I receiving thy most precious Bodie, I may for ever live in thee, by thee, and only for thee: and that when I shall leave this mortal life, I may, in the force & vertue of this Cœlestial food, obtain in Heaven that blis of union, in the light of glorie, with all thy blessed Saints and Angels; there to contemplate thy Divine Majesty, world without end.

I most humbly offer unto thee dear Jesu this holie Communion, and entirely resign my self to thee in thankful gratitude; for having thus given thy self to me by so ineffable a manner in the most blessed Sacrament. I most humbly crave thy powerful intercession, O immaculate Virgin Mother, and glorious Queen of Heaven. Intercede also for me, I beseech yee, the beloved Apostles of Jesus; O happy *Magdalen*, blessed *S. Mary of Ægypt*, and all ye glorious Saints; that I may imitate your humilitie, fervent devotion, and love, wherewith ye happily performed your last Communion of this Divine Banquet: Vouchsafe good Lord, that being thereby united to thee by Grace, I may never more be separated by any deadlie sin.

*Conclusion.*

*Conclusion.*

**T**Hank God for your good Affections.  
 1ly. Crave grace to make good use of  
 them. 3ly. Acknowledge with an humble heart  
 Gods gracious great favour for all your former  
 holie Communion's; for which invite all Crea-  
 tures to blesse him with you, and to praise and  
 glorifie his holie name for ever. *Pater, Ave,*  
*Credo.*

*The fifth MEDITATION*

*of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.*

**P**reparation. First, place your self in Gods  
 divine presence. 2ly. Beseech him to inspire  
 you with his grace. 3ly. Conceive your Soul  
 and Bodie now upon the point of separation,  
 and all worldlie concernments at an end.

*Considerations.*

**C**ONsidering that we are not certain of being  
 in a capacity to applie our selves to God  
 when this Sacrament shall be given us: there-  
 fore it is very expedient here to design one part  
 of this Exercise, whereby to render him that  
 duty, which we should be obliged then to do.  
 And by this means to prepare also our selves  
 aforehand

James 5. *aforehand to make good use of this holy Sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ for the sick;*  
 14. *to blot out the rest of their sins remaining through frailty and some negligence. And 2ly. it is to strengthen them against the strong assaults of the Devil in that time of greatest weakness; it diminisheth also the fear of death; and replenisheth the soul with much spiritual consolation. And 3ly. It restoreth health to the body, if God sees it so expedient for his glory, and for the good of the sick mans Soul.*

*In the next place considering seriously where- in you may be guilty for offending God by any of those your five senses to be annointed; Raise thence your heart to perfect sorrow for such offences, as you may have committed thereby; entirely abandoning your self in all willing and humble submission to Gods divine pleasure; and for his love to embrace your death with joy; and in the fervent practise of these following acts.*

*Affections, and holy Acts of thanks-giving  
 and adoration.*

**O** Loving Jesu, I adore thee as the Author and institutor of this holy Sacrament; and as the living source of all the grace therein contained; and in all the other Sacraments, which thou hast purchased for us, by the effusion of thy own most precious blood; and there



thereby hast merited all the happy effects of grace received by ungrateful Man.

Grant me O merciful Lord, thy gracious favour to receive this needful Sacrament at the end of my life; or in case I be deprived thereof, that my soul may then receive, by thy favorable goodness the grace which it should have had by this holy help of Extream-unction.

Lord *Jesu*, who a little before thy bitter death vouchsafed to receive that grateful Unction from holy and repentant *Magdalen*; as also by *Joseph* and *Nichodemus*, when they laid thy sacred body in the Sepulchre: grant that I receiving this holy Sacrament, and my last Unction, in honour and union of those acceptable and gracious Unctions; I may receive the divine Unction of the Holy Ghost, in that measure of heavenly grace, as shall be needful for my soul in that last dreadful hour of my death.

Endue me, dear Lord, with all fit dispositions for the fruitful receiving of this Sacrament; and work in me, I beseech thee, those happy effects of grace, there signifi'd by the exterior ceremonies thereof. Behold me prostrate at thy feet, and before all thy celestial Citizens, humbly confessing the sins of my whole life; and craving pardon with a repentant heart: wherewith I offer here to thee in sacrifice, all my corporable senses, together with the spiritual powers of my Soul. Anoint me, sweet *Jesu*, with the holy and sacred oyle of thy divine grace and mercy. Accept in satisfaction, I beseech

beseech thee, that blessed use which thy sacred humanity, thy immaculate Virgin Mother, and all thy other thrice happy Saints have made of all their said senses, and powers, in stead of my ill use of them: and grant me thy grace hereafter to use them to thy greater honour and glory.

At the parts to be annointed with holy Oyl, it will be fitting to make conformable acts in this manner, or otherwise, as God shall suggest.

At the eyes, either with the heart or mouth. I most humbly crave pardon, O my God, for all my sinful, proud, and curious looks; whereby my eyes may have offended thee. Now sanctifie them by the grace of this holy Sacrament; and grant that I may never so offend thee any more.

At the mouth. Pardon, my most merciful Lord, and loving Redeemer Jesu, wherein by word, or gluttony I have committed sin.

At the nose. Pardon me also, dear Lord I beseech thee, for my excesse, and great nicenesse, as also too great pleasure in perfumes and pleasant smells; grant that the merits of those ill favors, which, for my sake, thou mercifully vouchsafedst to suffer in the unsavory stable at thy birth; as also by that loathsome air upon Mount *Calvary*, at thy death; all my sins; by the ill use of this my sense of smelling; may graciously be expiated.

At the ears. I detest my sin, O God, forgiving so willing ear both to detraction, as also to all prophane and idle conversation, and for so much neglecting what was Divine and Holy, let the

the merits of my Saviours Patience and great Humility in hearing so many Blasphemies, Calumnies, and outrageous injuries, appease thy just indignation against my many sins committed by this sense.

At the hands. Pardon Divine Jesus, the many unlawful, and unprofitable actions done by me. In satisfaction whereof, apply; I most humbly beseech thee, those sacred merits of thy Divine actions, and great miracles, wrought by thy blessed hands, which were nailed to the Crosse, to pay the ransom of our sin.

At the feet. It grieves me Lord for all my sins by sloath to all good vertuous practises, and for my speedy quicknesse unto evil. From the bottom of my heart I most humbly beseech thee, my Sovereign Lord, to pardon me: and in satisfaction to apply the merits of thy wearisome steps for mans salvation; but them especially, my loving Redeemer, when bearing thy heavy Crosse whereon thou wast crucified for our sins.

Grant Lord I beseech thee, that by the application of this holy Sacrament, the sacred merits of thy bitter death and Passion may purifie my soul, and expiate my sinful crimes, that I may thereby obtain those needful dispositions required to dye happily in thy final grace.

Consider how different are the thoughts of a dying man, from those which he hath usually in time of health: and make a resolution to be true to himself when that precious moment shall come, which certainly you will have.

**B. h.** **Con-**

*Conclusion.*

1. **T**Hank God for your good affections. 2ly. Implore his grace to put them in practise. 3ly. Crave pardon for your negligence in prayer, *Pater, Ave, Credo.*

*The Sixth MEDITATION**Of our Agony, and hour of death.*

**R**eparation. 1. Place your self in the presence of God. 2ly. Beseech him to inspire you with his grace. 3ly. Conceive your self now speechlesse, ready to expire, and upon the very point of separation from all worldly designs, possessions and friends for ever; immediately to appear at Gods dreadful judgement, to give a most exact accompt of all the thoughts, words, and deeds of your whole life; and thereupon to receive your final doom to an endlessse bliss, or misery.

*Considerations.*

1. **C**onsider how different are the thoughts of a dying man, from those which he hath usually in time of health: and make a firm resolution to begin hence forward to do that presently, which certainly you shall then with

with to have done, when beholding it true, as David assures us; that our soul departing, the body returns to Earth: and in that day all our worldly objects; all our vain, or aspiring thoughts; all our conceived designs, either for pleasure, for honour, or for delight, they all will perish, and then will end in Man, as if they had never been. Ps. 145.

2ly. Consider this day, as if the last of your life: and therefore labour to behave your self with diligence and devotion, to negotiate there your eternal salvation. And for this effect you ought to apply all your thoughts and endeavors of this day, to contemplate Jesus Christ, as if in the last day of his life in this world; and to do all your actions therein, with the like disposition, and intention (the best you can) wherewith he accomplished his last actions, whilst he remained here upon Earth. I beseech him to endue you with some proportion of the affections and dispositions required to dye in that spirit of Divine love, of patience, Charitie, Humilitie and Conformitie wherewith he rendred up his blessed soul into the hands of his Heavenly Father upon the crosse, in union and adoration of which divine Jesus, I most entirely do sacrifice my last agony humble homage unto thine: O grant me then true repentant heart, and final perseverance by thy grace; that I then may hear from thee those joyful words of eternal Jubily *this day* *thou shalt be with me in Paradise.*

3ly. Make humbly a total oblation of your self, as a due sacrifice to the most blessed Trini-



ty. To God the Father for creating you : to the Son for redeeming you : and to the Holy Ghost for sanctifying you, uniting your self unto that grateful sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the Cross. crave humbly his grace, that You may. die as true holocaust to be totally consumed in the happie flames of true divine love. And in true conformitie to tender joyfully your self entirely to Gods holy will; for to live, or to die; when and in what manner his Heavenlie disposition shall ordain it ; as also what else soever, both in time and Eternity. *Ita pater quoniam sic placitum fuit ante te.*

*Affections and Resolutions.*

**L**ord Jesu, I adore thee in that very article of thy bitter death and agony. In union whereof, together with that holie agonie of the immaculate Virgin Mother, and of all thy blessed Saints, I here offer to thee my last expiring breath : most humbly beseeching thee, that this article of my death may be blest and sanctified by this my true desire and good intention of union unto thine and theirs : and that my life be sacrificed in those sacred flames of divine love wherein thy blessed Saints have so happily ended theirs.

O sacred Mother of God; O thou beloved disciple of our Lord, and thou O happie and penitent *Magdalen*, ye who had that special honour to accompanie my Lord Jesus at his dolorous death, and there to assist at the foot of the Cross, whilst thereupon he paid the dear ransom of our redemption, vouchsafe ye also to

assist me by your powerful intercession in that last passage to my Eternitie.

It would be also very expedient this day to read the passion of Jesus Christ, and the 17th. Chapter of S. John, which contains the last words, and the prayers of our Redeemer before he came to the Cross: as also to read the prayers of the Church for an agonizing soul; for they are very pious, and efficacious to obtain divine help. Nor do we know, whether at the day of our death we shall be able to make use of any such preparation. Let us therefore so read them now, as we ought to read them then; and with the self same dispositions, and affections, as if in that last article of our death.

Lord Jesu, for thy great mercie sake, grant me this happie grace, to consecrate the final instant of my mortal life, to the honour of that sanctified moment wherein thou didst expire upon the Cross; and that my last breath may yield forth a fervent act of divine and pure love of thee, which may persevere with my soul eternally.

This is Lord Jesu, my true hearty desire, and firm resolution: confirm, and so strengthen it, beseech thee, in holie grace, as that by final perseverance I may perform it to thy glory, and my own endless Bliss. Grant this, divine Redeemer, for thy most bitter passion sake, to this thy most unworthie and sinful Creature, whose whole hope and confidence dependeth wholly upon thy infinite merits and endless mercie, for in *in idipsum dormiam & requiescam*: and finally, O Lord, into thy hands I recommend my soul.

*Conclusion.*

1. **T**Hank God for your good Affections, and Resolutions. 2ly. Crave grace to put them in Execution. 3ly. Beseech him to pardon your negligence in Prayer. *Pater, Ave, Credo.*

*The seventh MEDITATION*

*Of our Particular Judgment immediately after Death.*

**P***Reparation.* 1. Place your self in the Presence of God. 2ly. Beseech him to inspire you with his grace. 3ly. Reflect upon that joyful sentence: *Come ye blessed, &c.* And upon the excessive horror of that other: *Go ye cursed, &c.* 4ly. Conceive your good Angel to advertise you, as it is said to the Virgins in the Gospel: *Behold your Spouse approacheth, prepare your Lamps to meet him,* well lightned by the vertuous acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity; which is that Oyl which makes our works to shine before God, and to shew us the way to his glorious Throne.

*Considerations.*

1. **W**E must consider our selves, now as at the point of death; and Jesus Christ

as if appearing to us in quality of our Sovereign Judge, come to pronounce our final sentence to an eternal life, or death, without all further appeal. Let us yield to him in quality thereof, all honour and homage; labouring by true love, and repentance to render him propitious to us, against that dreadful hour. That hour, after which no moment more of time will ever be given us. That deciding hour, which will determine us to joy or misery for all Eternity. O let us therefore entertain our most serious Thoughts, Affections, and Resolutions hereupon, whilst that both time, and mercy is afforded for the same.

2ly. Consider the immaculate Lamb, the Saint of Saints, and essential sanctity it self, Jesus Christ, infinitely far from all blemish of sin; and yet laid prostrate in a bloudie Agonie before his heavenly Father in the Garden, and soon after at *Pilates* feet; there charged with all the sins of the world, became the voluntarie Surety, and the accepted caution for all sinners whatsoever. And therefore it was that the Eternal Father did so severely exercise his divine and rigid justice upon that sacred humanity; and made it to undergo the judgment which was due to wicked man; permitting his most innocent and beloved Son to be condemned to that reproachful death upon the Crosse. Which judgment he accepted with most perfect submission to his heavenly Father, and ardent love to man: *Tea Father, for so it hath well pleased thee.* Mat. II: 26.

In honour, union, and adoration whereof;

here prostrate your self, as at the feet of Jesus Christ; and there acknowledge and adore him as the Sovereign judge, both of men and Angels, without appeal. Raise up your soul to true love, and gratitude, by these ensuing affections, or the like.

*Affections and Resolutions.*

**O** Divine Jesu, I honour thee in this thy particular coming to judge me at the Article of my death. And I here adore what thy Eternal decree shall there dispose of me; so enlighten me, I beseech thee, to discover the enormity of my sins, as I may behold them now, in the self same manner, as they would appear to me at the hour of my death: to the end I may by true repentance, and satisfaction make here my happy peace, before I fall into the final zeal of thy dreadful justice, when all time will be past for any favour or mercy.

I therefore now detest from my very heart, and renounce for ever all my sinful offences: and at the sacred feet of thy divine Mercy, I resolve most willingly to accept what punishment soever thy justice shall ordain me; nor can I hope for any other means whereby to expiate my grievous sin, but merely by thy mercy, and merits of thy most precious blood.

O infinitely loving God, who didst for my sake permit thy self to be led bound, and in all disgraceful manner to that prophane Tribunal of Pilate; and there with all malice and scorn to be presented and judged by him; thou being thy self the supreme and Sovereign Judge both



of the living and dead. O grant, I beseech thee, that all those indignities suffered for the love of Man, may graciously preserve me from that unhappy number, who shall neither love, nor praise thee during their cursed Eternity. And though most unworthy I be of this blessed effect of thy great mercy: Yet behold, O God, our Protector, and look upon the face of thy Christ. Thy divine and only begotten Son (Eternal Father) being adjudged to that dolorous death for my offence, may beg my pardon; and thereupon is grounded all my hope and humble confidence. Psalm. 83.

O Mother of Mercy, and faithful Advocate of all who crave thy powerful intercession, sacred Virgin, and Mother of God. O all ye blessed Angels, and Saints of Paradise, vouchsafe ye to intercede for me unto the most glorious Trinity; and offer up, I beseech ye, your past great sufferings for his sake, in part of satisfaction for my sins. And pray ye for me, that he deal not with me according to the rigour of his justice; but much rather answerably to the multitude of his mercies: to the end that I may love and praise him with you all, world without end.

#### Conclusion.

**T**Hank God for all your good affections, and Resolutions. 2ly. Crave grace to put them in execution. 3ly. Beseech him to pardon your negligences in Prayer. *Pater, Ave, Credo.*

The

## The eighth MEDITATION

### *Of the state of our death and burial,*

**R**eparation. 1. Place your self in the presence of God. 2ly. Beseech him to inspire you with his Grace. 3ly. Conceive your soul and body now to be separated: The first to appear before Gods dreadful Tribunal, to render him a most rigid accompr. The second now laid in the grave, to be food for worms; and being reduced to most loathsome putrefaction; must there return to its first extraction, earth, and ashes, until the day of Doom.

### *Consideration.*

**C**onsider, that as our blessed Saviour Jesus, hath vouchsafed to pass through all the several states of humane mortality; thereby to honour his Eternal Father in them all; and to sanctifie them particularly for our greater good: so likewise we ought to honour this, our most loving Redeemer, in all the states wherein we have been, or shall hereafter be.

And therefore having now adored him, as in the last instant of our life; by dedicating it as a sacrifice to his honour and glory: it now follows, that we honour and adore him also in the state of our death; wherein he himself remained for three days space. All which may be done, as followeth, by these

*Affections,*

*Affections, and Resolutions.*

**O** Jesu eternal life, and the original source, from whom all life doth spring: from whence proceeds it, that I thus behold thee brought under the dark shadow of death, by that dolorous separation of thy divine body and soul: and thereby also deprived of thy sacred Mother, of thy dear Apostles, Disciples, and of all thy beloved friends; which on their part also, was the greatest and most sensible grief to be imagined,

O divine and dear Lord Jesu, I adore, praise, and glorifie thee herein. I offer to thee all the honour which in this state hath ever been rendered to thee by thy blessed Mother, by the penitent *Magdalen*, by all thy holie Apostles, Saints and Angels; and by all which thy whole Church, both Militant and Triumphant doth, and shall ever render to thee, for this thy infinite love, and most profound humilitie,

In union of which blessed companie, and in true honour and homage to thy said sorrowful separation; I likewise do offer (to thee most loving Lord) that state, whereby one daie I must by death be also separated, both from Friends and kindred, and from all that, which in this world can any waies be dear to me,

O loving Saviour, in adoration of thy bitter death, and separation of thy divine Soul and bodie; I make thee now a most willing Sacrifice of mine. I offer also unto thee my burial, in honour of thy three daies lying buried in the Monument; in due adoration whereof, I here most cheerfullie bequeath my bodie to the earth, there

there to give worms their due; and it being reduced into dust, I desire that each several grain thereof may be as a tongue, and voice to praise and to glorifie continuallie thy holie burial, with all the other holie mysteries of our Redemption: that so with thy Kinglie Prophet I might perpetuallie sing: *all my bones shall say, Lord who is like to thee?*

Most merciful, and loving Lord, destroy utterly in me, I beseech thee, that cursed life of the old man, all wicked sin; make me to die perfectly to the world, to my self, and to all whatsoever is not thee. Mortifie so my eyes, my ears, my tongue, my hands, my feet, my heart, and all the powers both of my bodie, and Soul; that I may no more see, nor understand, nor speak, nor do, nor love, nor think, nor will, nor use anie other facultie corporal, or spiritual, of my bodie, or soul, but according to thy holie will. Grant I may so die to my self, as that my life *may be hid with Christ in God.*

Coloss. 3. O hide and burie my tepidity and indoevotion, in the fervour of thy divine love; and all my other vices and imperfections, in thy perfections, and vertues; that as the earth consumeth the corruption of the bodie, so may the sinful imperfections of my Soul, be consumed by the operations of thy heavenlie Grace in me.

O most pure Virgin, and beloved Mother of my Lord Jesus Christ; vouchsafe me thy powerful intercession, I beseech thee, that by my death and burial, I may render due honour and homage to that his dolorous death, which  
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did so deeply pierce thy tender heart; and also to that doleful state in the grave, which kept both thee, and all his dearest friends in three sad mourning daies for his bewailed absence. O holy Angel, my faithful Guardian, blessed St. Joseph, S. N. and all ye glorious Saints and Angels of Heaven; pray ye to God for me, that I be strengthened by his holie grace, to complie with all my present good purposes of doing well. Obtain ye for me, by your powerful intercession, that I may so serve, love, and obey him in this life; as that I may enjoy, praise, and glorifie him with you for all Eternity in the other.

*Conclusion.*

1. **T**Hank God for your Affections, and Resolutions. 2ly. Crave grace to put them in Execution. 3ly. Beseech him to pardon your negligence in Prayer. *Pater, Ave, Credo.*

*The ninth MEDITATION.*  
Of Hell, and of the woful state of the Damned after an evil death.

**P**reparation. Represent here to your self a dying man, in the obstinate perverseness of habitual mortal sin; and bereaved now of all further operation, either of sense or understanding: abandoned by God, by his good Angel; and deprived of all succour, and intercession of the blessed Saints, and Angels of Heaven; accompanied, and now beset about with infernal Spirits; and greatlie oppressed with  
manie



manie enormous sins : which causeth such horrid fear, as brings a mortal sweat of death all ovet his Bodie. And now with gashful, and troubled looks on everie side to espie some help in so great a distresse ; but finds no relief against so sad despair by a fruitlesse repentance, to ease his guilty Conscience (that unavoidable accuser) to condemn him for his sinful crimes.

Crave here Divine light dulie to conceive the horror of those most dresdful pains of the damned ; and grace to ayoid all cursed sin, the onlie cause thereof.

*Considerations.*

**H**ELL is the dungeon of Gods divine Justice, and angrie wrath, placed in the Centre of the Earth most opposite to Heaven ; and so abounds with all imaginarie great torments, as that all the sufferings in this world are to be esteemed but as a shadow in their regard : and are ordained by God for the Eternal punishment of all such as shall die without repentance in mortal sin.

This place is verie obscure, and that infernal fire doth cast no light, except some little sad glimps at several times, which serves but to augment their grief in beholding thereby the horrid apparitions of their enraged Executioners, and the hellish countenances of those damned Souls, there straitlie packed together as Bricks burning in a Kilm, without space either to turn or remove ; and filled with the abominable stench of that corrupt air, by the filth of those loathsome bodies, after the day  
of

of doom; besides the sharp and most cutting pains, resembling the Stone, Cholique, Gout, and what else soever is most sensible in this World: all which is not to be accompted, as the least biting of a flea, in comparison of those insupportable torments of Hell, which are to continue for ever, and all eternity.

Secondly consider how each sense shall there be tortured according as it hath co-operated here to offend Almighty God.

The eyes shall be tormented with the aspect of those most horrible and fearful infernal spirits.

The hearing with the sighing sobs, and blasphemous cursings of God; with the gnashing and grinding of teeth, and terrible imprecations against one another.

The tast shall be tormented with all which can be most offensive to that sense. The east with a continual enraged hunger and thirst; and yet in despair to obtain the least drop of water to refresh their enflamed tongue.

Their feeling shall be sensible throughout the whole bodie, of the sharpest pains which those infernal executioners can invent to inflict upon them; and what yet doth far exceed the rest, is, that gnawing worm of Conscience, bred by their own sinful neglect of so many divine helps of Gods grace, whereby they might so easilie have prevented their eternal miserie. In fine, all the senses of their bodies, as likewise all the powers of their unhappie souls, shall be tortured with what may be most contrarie to that object wherein nature is inclined to take most  
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content; the opposite torment whereof shall last so long as God is God, whose grace and infinite goodness they neglecting whilst time and mercy was afforded, they must now feel the rigor, both of his wrath and justice, for all eternitie; and be deprived of that his beatifying vision; as also of the companie of all those thrice blessed Heavenly spirits, wherein consists their greatest sufferings. And it far surpasseth all the other torments in Hell, that detestable Region, where no comfort shall be found in that cursed companie; but immortal rage and hatred mutually to each other. Parents there, and Children; Brothers and Sisters; Husband and Wife; yea, and the dearest Friends in this World, shall hate, detest, curse, and ban perpetually one another, without end.

Thirdly consider, what far exceeds, and without comparison, all heretofore mentioned of the horror of Hell, is the endlesse Eternitie of those most dreadful torments; to which no Age can put a term: no million of Ages will advance one moment towards that hopelesse end: nor yet as many millions more, as there be drops of water in the Sea; as there be, or have been; yea, or ever shall be sprigs of grasse produced by the Earth in the whole World. To which You may yet add as many leaves as have budded upon Trees from their first Creation: yea, add the seeming great infinitie of those little atomes in the air; and to them adjoyn, as many more, as a thousand of new Worlds could contain; yet would the continuance of those great endlesse pains of Hell surpass them all; they

they having no other measure but Eternitie. O Eternitie, and yet how little art thou considered by the meer sensual people of this World / though trulie if we but seriously make good reflexion thereupon, we must either judge them stark fools, or to have no faith at all, to be neither toucht, nor to make profit by this most wholsom thought of Eternity. O dreadful Eternity.

*Affections.*

O Stupendious and strange folly of such vain Men, as to subject themselves to these inexplicable miseries, for such frivolous and vain worldly toys, and deceitful pleasures of this World; so fickle, short, and traiterous in their employment!

O how justlie have my enormous sins ( dear Lord ) deserved these great and endless torments! yet let the infinite merits of thy most bitter Passion crave pardon for me. And seeing that of thy own meer gracious goodnesse, thou hast vouchsafed to preserve me in a capacitie, as yet, to make my happie peace with thee, whereas so many others for much lesse sin are now condemned, without all hope of redemption; grant me, dear Jesu, I beseech thee, that I may so co-operate now in time with this thy holie grace, as that I may adore, and praise thee for it, together with all thy blessed spirits for evermore.

O let us fear that infernal Goal of Hell; and yet much more all cursed sin, which condemns us thereunto. And seeing that our weal, or

woe, depends upon a happie death, which is but the Eccho of a vertuous life; let us fly all vice, and practise vertue; which is the means to attain to our eternal Beatitude.

Let us be wise in good time; doing now, what dying we shall wish to have done: for a sick Mans repentance (saith S. Aug.) is but infirm; and being made by a dying Man, may justly be feared, doth dye also with him.

O what would not a damned soul now do for its deliverance from those tormenting flames in endless despair! and seeing Gods infinite goodness and mercie to be no less in preserving us from Hell (having justly deserved it) than it would be to free us thence, after due condemnation, what gratitude must needs be due for having so often preserved us from thence; wherein so innumerable a multitude are, and ever shall be suffering, for far fewer sins than ours; to whom he hath yet graciously afforded : Cor. 6. acceptable time, and the days of salvation.

Let us make due reflexion upon Gods mercy, in preserving us from this abyss, and deep despair of endless tormenting miserie; and of our stupid negligence, whilst time for pardon is afforded to avoid the same.

O Eternitie, wert thou but indifferently considered now in time, it might convert the greatest sinner to true solid repentance; for if it seems to us intollerable to hold but a finger one quarter of an hour in the little flame of a candle; what may we thence conjecture it will be, to have both body and soul in those furious flames of Hell for all Eternity? for which of you can  
dwell



dwelt in the midst of devouring flames; or remain amongst burning coals, which shall never be extinguished?

All which being seriously pondered, who could be so stupidly insensible, or unchristianly dull, as not to use all vertuous industrie to escape this most dreadful place? which, though in time, by a holy endeavor, may be easilie avoided; yet being once wofully fallen into, no hope at all is left to get out, whilst God is God.

O my soul, if due reflexion upon the premises seem very terrible unto thee, and that thou fearest Hell (the most assured sequel of final perseverance in a sinful life) correct then thy self in good time, live well, and shun all mortal sin, and the dangerous occasion thereof: for canst thou fear to dye ill (saith S. Augustine) and yet fearest thou not to live ill? O no, the one is but in vain, and will nothing at all avail us, supposing that we amend not the other in due time.

#### Resolutions.

I Can conceive no better resolution to prevent this unparallel'd harm; than to resolve without delay to practise now, what at the last hour of death we shall undoubtedlie wish hartily to have done.

aly. To renew all the good purposes, and Resolutions which in our best times of devotion we firmly proposed for our future life to observe; especially if in time of great sicknesse; or in some other eminent peril of our life, we were then moved thereunto: reflecting often,

and very seriously hereupon ; and to crave humbly Gods grace to observe the same.

3ly. To resolve by Gods holy help to amend that unruly passion , and most habitual dangerous sin to which we find our selves most prone to offend. And for this effect daily to make use of the particular examen of conscience, according to the method which is mentioned above. pag. 89.

4ly. Seeing it is avow'd by the Holy Ghost ; that no remedy is so powerful to preserve us from wicked sins, as to call often to mind the memory of our four last ends ; we must resolve seriously to put the same in practise ; For he easily contemns all worldly things (saith holy S. Hier.) who thinks daily to dye ; and that either Heaven, or Hell must prove thereupon to be his lot for ever without end.

#### *The Conclusion.*

**G**ive humble thanks to God for your good Affections, and Resolutions. 2ly. Crave grace to put them in execution ; and to retain so lively a memory, and horror also of those internal torments ; as that it may deter you from all grievous sins. 3ly. Beg pardon for all negligence, and irreverence in your prayer. *Pater, Ave, Credo.*

#### *The tenth and last MEDITATION*

*Of the most happy state of the blessed, after a holy death.*

**R**eparation. You likewise here must represent to your self a dying Man ; but quite contrary

trary in Condition to what in the former meditation is proposed unto you, of a perverse and wicked sinner. For you must behold this happy creature, as visited by Jesus Christ himself; who comes to meet, and to conduct his blessed soul to its Beatitude; accompanied also with the glorious spirits of his heavenly Court, encompassing the bed, whereon he yields so happily his soul to God; whilst his good Angel there doth crown his victory against all his mortal enemies. For this is that thrice happy state of all such who cooperating faithfully with Gods divine help, shall dye in the final perseverance of his heavenly grace.

### Considerations

**I**T is here first to be considered, that Heaven being Gods eternal mansion place, made for himself, and his celestial favorites, the Saints and glorious Angels; how far may we well imagine that it exceeds in all respects the beauty, pleasure, and capacity of this inferior world, which is but the poor temporal lodging place for Mans short pilgrimage through this their mortal life!

2ly. Consider how *S. John* by the material comparison of Gold, Chrystal, and precious Stones, describeth to us the splendor and great glory of Heaven in a spiritual sense: as also the purity and glittering brightness of those glorified bodies: whose very inward thoughts are more manifest to each other, than are corporal objects to our view through the clearest chrystal glass: Yea, by the four glorified qualities, they

have the advantage of the highest priviledges which their nature can either desire, or conceive. For in *Clarity*, or brightnesse, they far surpass the Sun, being beautified without spot, and entire without the least blemish or defect. By *Impossibility*, joined to their Immortality, they are rendred incapable of suffering either hunger, or thirst; heat, or cold; sickness, or death; nor is any contrarie qualitie whatsoever able to annoy them. 3ly. By *Agility*, in the twinkling of an eie, the Saints transport themselves wheresoever they please, without any obstacle or coil. 4ly. By *Subtily*, or spirituality (as the Apostle speaks) a glorious bodie will pierce the solidst Iron, or greatest Mountains of stone; and like to the Sun which shines clear through the closest glasse, or hardest Chrystal, they need no force to make open their way.

Add thirdlie to this, how infinitelie the conversation of that most blessed companie, in the glorious presence of their immortal King, doth yet increase their happinesse, in the perfect union of true mutual love; whereby they joy at each others beatitude, as for their own; and thereby their blisse is multiplyed, according to the immensitie, and great number of those heavenlie, and thrice happie Elect.

Finallie by all this, it now plainlie appears, that Heaven is the state of our eternal blisse, both of bodie and Soul; the measure whereof is so immense, as according to the Prophet *Esai*, and great *S. Paul*, no eie hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor can the heart of man conceive the pleasure, honour, and content which God hath there

there provided for all such as do true love and serve him; it being the possession of his own glorious Majestic, and after the most excellent manner whereof any pure Creature can be capable. It is a state abounding with all good, imaginable, and without the least mixture of any evil, or doubt of ever losing that perfect and compleat enjoyment of whatsoever can be desired; and devoid of the least appearance of what we may fear. For the senses of the bodie, as well as all the powers of the Soul, shall there enjoy the severall objects of their chief content, in a measure above all humane capacity; whilst the Soul in that beatifical Vision, shall be absorpt with joy in all Cœlestial felicity; and in a manner, which onlie God himself can comprehend; who is the living Fountain of that great torrent of inexplicable and endless bliss.

*Affections.*

**A**LL these ineffable joies, and supernatural priviledges of this Cœlestial City, being rightlie pondered; well may we with the Kinglie Prophet crie out: *O how beloved are thy Tabernacles, O Lord, my soul doth covet, and fainteth after them. Yea Lord, I love exceedingly the beauty of thy Pallace, and of thy Mansion place: for in respect thereof all worldlie wealth, all honour, pleasures, and contents, are base, and low unworthy objects of our soul.* Pl. 83.

O what prerogatives our souls shall likewise gain by this our sole Beatitude, consisting in the fruition, and clear Vision of Gods divine Essence; and to behold the perfection of his



Attributes, together with the operation of his infinite Power, Wisdome, and Goodnesse: and this by the help of that light of glorie, which is communicated to everie one proportionably to that degree of grace which they had merited in this life; and by it they shall be beautified, sanctified, and in a certain manner even deified, by the true Divinitie it self; *for we know* (saith S. **1 Joh. 3.** John) *that when he shall appear, we shall be like to him*; in such a manner, he means, as the Iron red hot from the Furnace, seems to be in nature changed, and in the external appearance like to true fire it self; Yea, God shall possesse us, and **1 Cor. 15** be all in all; for our understanding, and will shall be wholie possessed with his praise, admiration, and love; and we shall be so absorpt in him, as in an Ocean of joy.

O what price can be too dear for this blessed purchase! what pains too great to conquer this Heavenlie Habitation! If Jesus Christ himself was first to suffer his dolorous Passion before he could enter into his glorie; must we expect to be admitted without suffering for it? See in **Ch. 14.** the Acts of the Apostles what sharp and grievous passages Gods blessed Saints endured; and let us not presume to be partakers of their joy, unlesse we first here also tast of their sufferings; nor ever to be glorified with Jesus, unlesse we first be crucified with him: for he hath so decreed **Act. 24.** it, who cannot change, that Heaven must not **19.** be entred, but by the door of sufferance, and by many tribulations.

*Conclusion*

*Conclusion, and Resolution.*

**T**Hese premisses rightly considered, it may well be thought impossible to find a Creature, endued but with common sense and reason, to act so very contrarie to them both, as for a moment of deceitful satisfaction in this world, to forfeit that eternal blisse in the other : yea, for so base, so incertain, and meer vain deluding pleasures of this life, to lose those Rich, assuredly immortal, and Divine delights in Paradise.

If therefore we desire to become the happie Citizens of this most glorious *Hiernsalem*, we must propose to our selves with a firm and constant resolution to walk by the narrow path which leads thereunto : that is, by a vertuous life to conquer our unrulie passions, our disordered appetites, and unlawful affections : as also by the holy exercise of vertue, and good works, to make store of that blessed merit in this life, which is the true seed producing everlasting glorie in the other : that sowing here by contrite tears in repentance ; we may reap in great abundance the fruit of an endlesse joy. For as Grapes are not gathered from thorns, <sup>Math. 7.</sup> nor Figs from the thistle : so would it be in vain <sup>16.</sup> for us to expect the reward due to vertue, from <sup>Luk. 6.</sup> the sinful practice of vice. <sup>44.</sup>

Let us now therefore with our whole hearts both praise, glorifie, and adore the great goodnesse of this our most merciful and loving God, who hath not only made us capable to be partakers of this his everlasting felicitie, but hath  
also

also purchased with the price of the precious blood of his only begotten and dear Son, Jesus Christ, so many several, and most efficacious means, whereby we may so assuredly obtain the same. For which we ought in all due justice, and humble gratitude, to consecrate our selves entirely to his divine love and service; beseeching with a fervent heart his efficacious grace and mercie; that after our departure from this mortal life, we may for ever blesse and magnifie him in the other.

Finally, conclude this holy exercise, ardently desiring, to be ingulfsed into those torrents of Cœlestial delights of divine love: there beginning to glorifie, and perfectly to love this our eternal God; in the view, and thought of which most happy day; *I will rejoyce in these things which were said to me; we shall go into the house of my Lord, for blessed are they that dwell in thy house, O Lord; for ever and ever they shall praise thee.* Let us aforehand then, and from this very instant now begin to celebrate this happy feast, and joyful day by the help of fervent affections, and ardent ejaculations from a divinely enamored heart, saying this ensuing Prayer.

O most divine and glorious Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I adore, I blesse, and magnifie thee for all thy divine perfections in three Persons, and one only essence. For all thy great works both of mercy and justice; as well towards me, as to all thy other Creatures, both in Heaven, and Earth. I here offer to thee all the adorations, praises, and benedictions which ever have, are, and ever shall be given to thee.

O my only glory, beatitude, and love; I do wholly sacrifice my self to thee, to be absorpt and consumed for ever within those pure flames of thy divine Love. O what love, or praises am I able to render thee, as well for thy own infinite merit, as for the innumerable benefits to all thy other Creatures; and in particular to my most unworthy self.

O my sovereign Lord, let these thy Creatures, the Angels, the Saints, thy blessed Mother, together with all thy infinite power, as well of thy Divinity, as humanity, let them be all wholly employed in praising and blessing thee for all Eternity. O how great a consolation is it to me, to think that one day I shall love, bless, and praise thee for ever! It even melts my very heart into joy, with hope that the happy day will come wherein I shall be wholly converted into a perpetual thanks-giving of all praise and eternal glory to thee. But ah how long, dear Lord, shall I yet expect this blessed day! *O woe is to me, that my sojourning is prolonged, for as the Hart desireth after the Fountains of water, so doth my soul thirst after thee O God.* Vouchsafe that my conversation may henceforth be in Heaven, whilst I expect this happy day: and that I so live upon Earth, as that my heart and mind be ever with thee; and that my labour and chief industry may be to establish thy Kingdom within my soul. Destroy in me, O Luk. 17. Lord, whatsoever may be contrary to thy pure love, and direct all my thoughts, words, and deeds to thy greater honour and glory. O thrice happy Princes of that Coelestial Court; what

Ps. 119. 9.  
Ps. 41. 2.

what joy and beauty shines in your beatifi'd eyes / what perfect peace, and true tranquillity do your blessed hearts enjoy ! O what heavenly harmony your sweet voices make, by your continual singing : *benediction, and glory, praise, and thanks-giving, all honour, virtue, force, and felicity before all Eternity to our immortal God !* by whose pure goodnesse, and meer mercy we are admitted to the fruition of that Coelestial Beatitude. To whom be all honour and glory World without end. Amen.

Thank God for all your holy affections, and good Resolutions. 2ly. Crave grace to put them faithfully in execution. 3ly. Beseech him to pardon all your former negligences in his service, and prayer. And firmly propose for the future to be much more careful to amend. *Pater, Ave, Credo.*

You have seen now the order of this needful preparation in time of health, whereby to dispose your soul to a happy death. The reasons alledged convince, it's much conducing to that main point, whereon depends Eternitie. The profit of which anticipating exercise was experienced by *S. Gertrud* ; who assures us, that she having once practis'd it, our blessed Saviour himself revealed to her, that the devotion therein was so very pleasing unto him ; as he even then did presently accept the same for the hour of her death, as she desired.

It therefore now only remains ( Christian, and dear Catholick Reader ) that I conclude, exhorting you to make good use of this important exercise ( as also of all the former Rules ) which,



which, though I doubt not, but by your devout perusal, it will produce very pious affections, and laudable Resolutions in your soul; yet you must be verie careful not to rest only in them; they being but meerly helps, and dispositions upon the true end, and fruit of holy prayers; which is the accomplishment of the will of God, by mortifying for his sake our unruly passions, and disordered affections, whereby our stubborn will is made plyable to vertue. And as the Iron, first softened by fire, becomes so yielding to the workmans hammer, as it may easilie be fashioned to what form he desires: So I do much confide, that this little Treatise will prove a furnace of holy devotion, so to inflame your heart with the fervour of true piety; as you will find it verie pliable to put in execution those holy Affections and good purposes and resolutions of your former devotions; wherein consists the very perfection of all good prayer.

And to the end that you may reap in much more abundance, this the happiest treasure of true Christian sanctity; I cannot omit here finally to exhort you, that when you desire (and fit opportunity shall invite you) to make a spiritual exercise upon these Meditations of a preparation to death; that then, after your devotions upon each severall Meditation, you also write down your Resolutions, and best affections, and the reasons also which moved you to such resolutions, as you conceive most fitting to be observed for your future life and conversation. And having done the like in every meditation throughout the whole time of that your spiritual Retreat; I then  
again

as earnestly once more exhort you, to draw from them all in general, one prefixed Rule, which may serve you as a constant set order for all your actions; and as a distribution also for your time, as may best agree to your condition, and present occasions. All which you having with freedom and confidence communicated to your Ghostly Father, and had his advice and approbation for your more securely proceeding with true prudence and vertue therein: I would then wish you to observe it, as your Rule, with all convenient punctuality.

And what now lastlie I desire of you is, that you accept in good part this my ill polished work, drawn from some notes upon former observations, as they then conduced to my own Practice upon several occasions. Your vertue, perhaps will make much better use of them, than I have done; because the fault was mine, and not the Rule; which being right, it cannot fail. And if such as use it, shall draw but the line of their conversation thereby, it must needs be right, both in the sight of God and man.

Finallie my proposing this Rule to you, may prove, I hope, not void of my own proper interest, whilst by renewing here my former reflexions with some more seriousnesse for your sake, a better impression may be made in my own soul, to live my self hereafter with more conformity to these holy Rules, which I have proposed to you: and whereby (if we shall but truly regulate our future lives and actions) we may

...and fully confide; God holy grace and  
that they will rightly direct through the  
perilous Labyrinth of this mortal life, unto the  
secure Port of Eternal felicity. For which, I  
once more, begg heartily your Prayers, and  
thereupon conclude with what blessed S. James  
the Apostle recommendeth unto us; *ch. 5. that*  
*we pray for one another, to the end we may be sa-*  
*ved*, through the infinite mercy of God the E-  
ternal Father, and by the blessed merits of his  
most dear Son Jesus; as also by the grace of the  
Holy Ghost: to which Divine Trinity, and un-  
divided Unity be all honour, praise, and glory  
both now, and for evermore. Amen.

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#### APPROBATION..

**W**E underwritten Doctors of Divinity of  
the University of Paris, do certifie, that  
having read over this Pious Treatise; Entituled,  
*Christian Rules, proposed to a vertuous Soul aspi-*  
*ring to holy Perfection, &c.* Written by *W. C.* we  
have not only found, that all things therein  
contained, are consonant, and conform to the  
Divine Faith, and belief of the Catholick  
Church, but also we hope that it will very much  
contribute to the great advantage of Christian  
Piety, and edification of such devout, and reli-  
gious souls, as shall read, and practise it. In  
witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed  
our names. At Paris this 9th. of Decemb. 1655.

H. Holden.

E. Tirel.

**F I N I S.**

